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BY

MR. WILLIAM J. HOWARD

IN MEMORY OF HIS LATE WIFE, MRS. ANNIE
HALLECK KELSEY HOWARD, A GRADUATE
OF THE LAW DEPARTMENT,
CLASS OF 1880.

APRIL 8, 1902

THE

WORKS

OF THE

Long-Mournful *and* Sorely-Diſtreſſed

ISAAC PENINGTON,

WHOM

The LORD, in his tender Mercy, at length Viſited and Relieved by the Miniſtry of that deſpiſed People called

QUAKERS;

AND IN THE

SPRINGINGS of that LIGHT, LIFE, and HOLY POWER in him, which they had truly and faithfully teſtified of, and directed his Mind to, were theſe things written;

AND

Are now publiſhed as a thankful Teſtimony of the Goodneſs of the LORD unto him, and for the Benefit of others.

They alſo that erred in ſpirit, ſhall know underſtanding; and they that murmured, ſhall learn doctrine. ISAIAH XXIX. 24.

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A

QUESTION

TO THE

PROFESSORS of CHRISTIANITY,

WHETHER

They have the true, living, powerful, ſaving Knowledge of CHRIST, or no?

WITH

Some QUERIES concerning CHRIST, and his APPEARANCES; his taking upon him our Fleſh; as alſo concerning his Fleſh and Blood, and our being formed thereof, and feeding thereon.

AND

An Incitation to Profeſſors ſeriouſly to conſider, whether they or we fail in the true Acknowledgment and owning of the CHRIST which died at Jeruſalem.

LIKEWISE

Some Propoſitions and Conſiderations concerning the Nature of Church-Worſhips and Ordinances ſince the Death of the Apoſtles, for the ſake of the Simplicity, which hath been long held captive therein.

WITH

The Sounding of Bowels towards thee, O ENGLAND!

Alſo a faithful Guidance to the Principle and Path of TRUTH.

WITH

Some ſenſible experimental QUESTIONS and ANSWERS from the Tenth Chapter of JOHN.

By ISAAC PENINGTON,

Priſoner in AYLESBURY, who (by the Counſel of the LORD) hath choſen rather to ſuffer Affliction with the deſpiſed People of GOD, than to enjoy the Pleaſures of Sin for a Seaſon.

THE

PREFACE.

"THIS is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true "God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent." Whom did the Father ſend? Did he not ſend the Son of his love? From whence did he ſend him? Did he not ſend him out of his own boſom? Whither did he ſend him? Did he not ſend him into the world, to take upon him a body, and glorify the name of the Father, doing his will therein? He laid down his glory, ſtripping himſelf of the form of God, and appearing in habit as a man, in their raiment, with their garment upon him; in which, as a ſervant, the ſeed (the heir of all) ſerved the Father. And now his work being as good as done, he looks back at the glory which he had laid down for the Father's ſake, looking up to the Father for the reſtoring of it to him again. "I have glorified thee on the earth," ſaith he, "I have finiſhed "the work which thou gaveſt me to do. And now, O Father, glorify "thou me with thine own ſelf, with the glory which I had with thee be-"fore the world was," *John* xvii. 4, 5.

Now having ſought and travelled (from my childhood) after the true knowledge of God, and of his Chriſt; and having been ſatisfied with nothing elſe that ever I could meet with, and having at length (through the tender mercy of the Lord, and guidance of his Spirit) met with this, and been ſatisfied therewith, finding it to be the eternal life, the true food, the living power, the pure reſt, the joy and ſalvation of my ſoul, I cannot but teſtify it to thoſe that lay out their money for that which is not bread, and their labour for that which ſatisfieth not.

We (ſome of us, at leaſt) laid out as much of our money as others, who now deſpiſe us, have done; and as much of our labour; and (I may ſpeak it in the fear of the Lord, and in true ſenſe, without boaſting) ſome of us had as much of that which they feed on, and call bread, as they have now. Yet when the Lord brought us to the true balance, we found it not to be bread, nor able to give the ſoul true ſatisfaction. The bread was not that

which

which we then called bread, but that which we overlooked, and wiſt not what it was. But the eternal life which was hid with the Father, and is manifeſted in the Son, and made known to the ſoul (as the Son is manifeſted to it, and revealed in it) that is bread indeed, that is meat which periſheth not, but will endure when all literal and outward knowledge of God and Chriſt fails, and will fall ſhort of ſatisfying that hunger of the ſoul, which is after the ſubſtance itſelf.

Now to draw mens minds to a ſenſe of truth, to a ſenſe of that which is the thing, that they might know the bread indeed, that they might know the living waters, come to them and drink thereof, and find Chriſt in them a well of water ſpringing up to eternal life; therefore was it in my heart to give forth this queſtion, and the enſuing queries; which he that rightly anſwers, muſt know the thing; and he that doth not rightly know the thing, by his inability to anſwer, may find that he doth not, and ſo may wait upon God that he may receive the knowledge of it, and come to it for the eternal life which it freely giveth.

The Jews were puzzled with a literal knowledge of the law and prophets, and about the Meſſiah to come, according to their underſtanding of the prophecies concerning him, and ſo were kept from the true knowledge thereby. Moſt ſorts of thoſe that now profeſs Chriſt, are puzzled about a knowledge concerning the outward body, fleſh, and blood of Chriſt, according as they apprehend the ſcriptures to ſpeak; and ſo the veil is over their hearts likewiſe, and they cannot ſee the eternal life and ſubſtance, no more than the Jews, but by an outward literal knowledge are kept back from the thing, as the Jews were. Now the breathing of my heart to the Lord is, To take away the veil of all hearts that ſincerely deſire after truth, and to open the the true eye in them, that they may ſee the deſire and beloved of their ſouls, and may be led by him into the true travel, out of ſelf, towards the kingdom; yea, into the very land of the living, where the food of life is fed upon, where the living ſprings flow, where are vineyards which we planted not, and dwelling-places which we built not, where the fruit of the vine of God's planting (the wine of the kingdom) is drunk of, even new in the kingdom, with the Father and Son in the Spirit, who are One and All there.

The Lord give a ſenſe and underſtanding, that the ear of the needy, the afflicted in ſpirit, the mourners, the captives, the bowed down may hear, and may be drawn to touch that which hath the virtue in it, and which effectually redeemeth thoſe that wait upon it, from all that boweth down and oppreſſeth.

A

QUESTION

TO THE

PROFESSORS of CHRISTIANITY.

THE Queſtion is not, whether they know what is ſaid of Chriſt in the ſcriptures; but whether they know it *ſavingly*, *truly*, *livingly*, *powerfully?* Yea, they may know what is ſaid of him, and yet not know him of whom thoſe things are ſaid. As it was with the Scribes and Phariſees; they knew what was ſaid of Chriſt in the law and prophets; but they knew not himſelf, when he appeared in that body of fleſh. So men may now know what the apoſtles and the evangeliſts have ſaid concerning his appearance in a body of fleſh (concerning his birth, circumciſion, baptiſm, preaching, doctrine, miracles, death, reſurrection, aſcenſion, interceſſion, *&c.*), and yet not know him of whom theſe things are ſaid. Yea, they may know what is ſaid concerning the word which was from the beginning, and yet not know the word, the power, the life itſelf.

Since the prevailing of the apoſtles teſtimony, the way of the enemy hath not been directly to deny Chriſt, but to bring men into ſuch a knowledge of Chriſt, as ſaves not. And as the enemy did own Chriſt, when he appeared in that body of fleſh, ſaying, *I know thee who thou art, the holy one of God*; ſo he hath found it for his advantage, almoſt ever ſince, to own that appearance of his. So that this he doth not oppoſe, nor mens knowledge and underſtanding of ſcriptures, ſo as to confirm them in this. But the ſaving knowledge, the true knowledge, the living knowledge, the powerful knowledge of truth, that he always oppoſeth; for that alone overturns and deſtroys his kingdom in man, and brings man from out of his reach.

Now there is a vaſt difference between knowing the relations concerning a thing, and knowing the thing related of. And there is alſo a great deal

deal of difference between believing the relations concerning a thing, and believing in the thing which is related of.

Spiritual things cannot be ſavingly known, but in union with them, in the receiving of them. A man can never really know the Spirit of God, by all that can be ſaid concerning it, but he muſt firſt feel ſomewhat of it, whereby he may truly know it. So the peace, the joy, the life, the power, they paſs the underſtanding; and a man can never rightly know them by reading, or comprehending ever ſo much concerning them; but by coming out of himſelf, and travelling thither where they are given and made manifeſt, he may come into acquaintance with them. And if the peace which Chriſt gives, the joy, the life, the power, cannot be thus known by literal deſcriptions; how can he, who is the fullneſs of all, the fountain of them all, the treaſury of all perfection, in whom are hid all the riches and treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge; how can he be known by outward and literal deſcriptions?

Now we have travelled through theſe things. We knew formerly what ye know now; and we alſo know now, what God hath given us further; and what our former knowledge was, and what our preſent knowledge is. And this is it which gives us ſatisfaction.

Our knowledge is in a principle, wherein we receive our capacity of knowing, and wherein the Father (from whom the principle came) teacheth us. And this is his way of teaching us; by making us one with the thing he teacheth. Thus we learn Chriſt, by being born of him, by putting him on. Thus we know his righteouſneſs, his life, his wiſdom, his power, by receiving a proportion of them, which giveth an ability to diſcern and acknowledge the fullneſs. And in this we receive the underſtanding of the ſcriptures, and know the ſeed of the woman (which bruiſeth the ſerpent's head), by receiving the ſeed, by feeling its growth in us, and its power over the enemy. Then we know the thing; likewiſe we know the woman that brings forth this ſeed after the Spirit, which is the Jeruſalem above; and we know alſo, and ſingly acknowledge, the bringing forth of it outwardly after the fleſh. This ſeed we know to be the ſeed of Abraham, the ſeed of David after the fleſh, and the ſeed of God after the power of the endleſs life; and we are taught of God to give the due honour to each; to the ſeed of God in the firſt place, to the ſeed of David in the ſecond place. There was the ſeed that wrought the thing, which ſeed was the life; and the ſeed in which he wrought it, which was formed into a veſſel like ours, but without ſin, in which the pure Lamb appeared in the pure power of life, which kept the veſſel pure; and ſo he (who was to be the firſt fruits) had the honour above all his brethren, being anointed with the oil of gladneſs above his fellows.

But we alſo are born of the ſame ſeed. He is formed in us; we are formed of him; we are as well of his fleſh and blood, as he was of ours. And by being thus formed, and feeling him grow up in us, and receiving

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an underſtanding from him, and in him, thus we come to know him, and to underſtand the words of ſcripture concerning him. By feeling and knowing the Lamb in our veſſels, we know alſo what was the Lamb in his veſſel.

Thus we know things in the certainty and demonſtration of God's Spirit, even in the light which ſhines from him, and in the life which he begets; and we ſpeak of things as they are, and as we feel them to be in the true life, which the Spirit of Chriſt hath begotten in us. And we can truly ſay concerning the ſcriptures, That now we believe, not ſo much becauſe of the relation of things concerning Chriſt, which we have found in them; but becauſe we have ſeen and received the thing which the ſcriptures ſpeak of, and find it to be the very thing indeed, the very Chriſt of God, the ſpotleſs one, the living garment of righteouſneſs and ſalvation, wherein God findeth no fault, and in which the ſoul appears without blame before him. And concerning this, can we ſpeak words of its nature, words of its virtue, words of its life, power, and righteouſneſs; which that which is of the fleſh cannot hear, but that which is born of God, naturally owneth and underſtandeth. Why ſo? Becauſe it knoweth the nature of the thing, and receiveth them in the ſavour thereof. Can life deny life? Can the birth of life deny that which ſprings out of the ſame womb? No, no. The children which are born of wiſdom, do juſtify wiſdom in its ſeveral ſproutings forth and appearances; but that which denies it, is a birth after the letter, a birth after the literal and outward knowledge of things, a birth of the comprehending wiſdom; that indeed reproacheth and blaſphemeth the incomprehenſible wiſdom, in its incomprehenſible ways, and would reſtrain life to what they apprehend, or can comprehend by the letter concerning it.

And this may be a great evidence to profeſſors, that they know not indeed Chriſt in his nature, Spirit, life, and power; becauſe they ſpeak not of him as perſons who feel the thing, and ſpeak from the preſent ſenſe of it, and acquaintance with it, but only as perſons that bring forth a notion they have received into their underſtandings. And yet they fail therein alſo; for they ſpeak not of Chriſt according as the ſcriptures hold him forth, compared one with another, but as they have groſly apprehended concerning him from ſome ſcriptures, as the Jews outward did. For the ſcriptures ſpeak not only of a body, but alſo of him that appeared in the body; nor only of bodily fleſh, blood, and bones, but alſo of ſuch fleſh and bones, whereof Chriſt and his church conſiſt. He is Chriſt (ſay the ſcriptures) who is one with the Father, who came from the Father, in whom the Father was, and who was in the Father; ſo ſaid Jeſus of himſelf (lifting up his eyes to heaven, and praying to the Father of his diſciples, and the children whom the Father had given him) more than once in that ſeventeenth chapter of John. Yea he is Chriſt, whom a man cannot ſee, but he muſt ſee the Father alſo; and whom, whoſoever ſeeth the Father, ſeeth; who was before

Abraham

Abraham was; whom no man could know whence he was, even as no man can know whence the Father is. Chriſt granted the Jews that they knew him, and whence he was as to his body; and yet for all that, he was the Chriſt who was to come, whom no man knew from whence he was. What was that, Chriſt called *me*, ſpeaking to Philip? *Haſt thou not known me, Philip? Haſt thou not ſeen me?* What, doſt thou know me after the fleſh, after the body? Doſt thou take that for me? Have I been ſo long with you, and do you know me no better than ſo? The body is from below, the body is like one of yours (only ſanctified by the Father, and preſerved without ſin); but I am the ſame Spirit, life, and being with the Father. We are one ſubſtance, one pure power of life, and we cannot be divided; but he that ſees one, muſt needs ſee both; and he that knows one, muſt needs know both. This is the Lamb of God which John bare witneſs of, which he ſaid was before him, *John* i. 15. which the body was not.

Now friends, if you have this living ſpiritual knowledge, if ye hold it in him that is true; then own and acknowledge it (as it is expreſſed in the ſcriptures, and as God hath now brought it forth in his people), that ye may manifeſt yourſelves to that which is of God, that ye are of him. There is an underſtanding and wiſdom of man, and there is a witneſs of God, which witneſs gives true judgment. Man (at beſt) judgeth but according as things appear to him from the ſcriptures; but the witneſs judgeth of the things of God in the demonſtration of the Spirit, according as they are felt and known to be in him.

But if ye have not this knowledge, but have long laid out your money and labour for that which is not bread, nor can yield the true ſatisfaction; Oh! come to the waters, and receive that which is given freely, without money and without price! Oh! ſell all for the pearl, for the knowledge which is of life, for the knowledge which is life! *I am the way, the truth, and the life*, ſaith Chriſt; this is life eternal to know. And wait to feel the rock laid as a foundation in you, even the ſeed of God, the life of Chriſt, the Spirit of Chriſt revealed in you, and your ſouls born of it, and built upon it. Oh! that ye could come out of your own underſtandings, that ye might feel and receive the love of my heart, and know the travail of my bowels for you; that ye might be born of the truth, and know and receive it as it is in Jeſus, and as it is felt in the Spirit, and its own pure power.

Now a little further, to remove the ſcruples and prejudices out of the minds of ſuch as ſometimes have been touched with the power of truth, and have had the witneſs of God reached to in their hearts; but afterwards the enemy hath raiſed miſts, and caſt blocks in their way, ſtirring up in them hard thoughts againſt us, as if we denied what the ſcriptures affirm in this thing, and indeed (in effect) that Chriſt which died at Jeruſalem, and ſet up a natural principle within, inſtead thereof:

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To remove this out of the minds of the honeſt-hearted (who in the guidance of God might light on this paper) I ſhall open my heart nakedly herein.

1. We do own that the word of God (the only begotten of the Father) did take up a body of the fleſh of the virgin Mary, who was of the ſeed of David, according to the ſcriptures, and did the will of the Father therein, in holy obedience unto him, both in life and death.

2. That he did offer up the fleſh and blood of that body (though not only ſo; for he poured out his ſoul, he poured out his life) a ſacrifice or offering for ſin (do not, oh! do not ſtumble at it; but rather wait on the Lord to underſtand it: for we ſpeak in this matter what we know) a ſacrifice unto the Father, and in it taſted death for every man; and that it is upon conſideration (and through God's acceptance of this ſacrifice for ſin) that the ſins of believers are pardoned, that God might be juſt, and the juſtifier of him which believeth in Jeſus, or who is of the faith of Jeſus.

3. What is attributed to that body, we acknowledge and give to that body in its place, according as the ſcripture attributeth it, which is through and becauſe of that which dwelt and acted in it. But that which ſanctified and kept the body pure (and made all acceptable in him) was the life, holineſs, and righteouſneſs of the Spirit. And the ſame thing that kept his veſſel pure, it is the ſame thing that cleanſeth us. The value which the natural fleſh and blood had, was from that; in its coming from that, in its acting in that, in its ſuffering through that: yea, indeed, that hath the virtue; that is it which is of an unchangeable nature, which abideth for ever; which is pure, and maketh pure for ever; and it is impoſſible for a man to touch it, but he muſt feel cleanſing by it. Now this living virtue and power man was ſhut out from by the fall; but through the true knowledge of the death of Chriſt, the way is made open for it again, and man brought to it to be baptized, waſhed, cleanſed, ſanctified, fitted for and filled with life. So that this is it that doth the thing; this is it from whence Chriſt had his own fleſh and blood (for we are taught, both by the Spirit, and by the ſcriptures, to diſtinguiſh between Chriſt's own fleſh and that of ours, which he took up and made his); which fleſh and blood we feed of in the Spirit; which they cannot feed on which ſerve at the outward tabernacle; nor they neither which know only the outward body; but they only that feed in the Spirit.

Now of this thing we might ſpeak yet more clearly and plainly, could men hear our words. But if we have ſpoken to you earthly things (in parables and figures) ſuitable to your underſtanding, and ye believe not, how ſhall ye believe, if we ſpeak to you heavenly things; if we ſhould tell you plainly of the Father, in whom is all the life of the Son, and all the virtue and ſalvation that ever the Son had from him? The Jews were to learn in types, figures, and ſhadows, till Chriſt came. And after Chriſt came, he alſo taught them in reſemblances and ſimilitudes of things: and the apoſtle

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wrote and ſpake much to perſons, as juſt coming out of that ſtate, in a language ſuited to that ſtate. But he that comes into the thing itſelf, and is taught there by the Spirit, after he is grown up and made capable, he is taught plainly the nature of the heavenly things, and the words of the apoſtles (concerning the deep things of God) which are myſterious to others, are manifeſt and plain to him. Yea, the Lord ſo teacheth him things, as words cannot utter; that is, he ſo knoweth the peace of God, the joy of his Spirit, the life and power of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, his wiſdom, righteouſneſs, and pure precious ways of ſanctifying the heart, the tender mercy, faithfulneſs, and rich love of the Father, *&c.* as he cannot utter to any man; nay, ſo as he never learned (nor could learn) from words about the things; but by the ſenſe and experience of the thing itſelf, the Lord (in whom are the depths of life, and who giveth the ſenſe and underſtanding of the deep things of the Spirit) opening them in him, and manifeſting them to him. And indeed this is the right and excellent way of knowledge, to come into the union, to come into the thing itſelf; to learn in the union, to ſee and know in the thing. This is the way that the Lord teacheth all his children in the new covenant, by the inward life, by the pure light within, by the inward demonſtration of his Spirit, by the power and virtue of the truth itſelf, which it hath in him that is true. And he that is in the Son, hath ſome meaſure of this life; and he that hath not ſome meaſure of this life, is not in the Son; but in a talk and wiſe knowledge of things after the fleſh, which will periſh, and he with it, who abideth there. For no man can be ſaved, but by coming into the knowledge which is of a pure, eternal, living, ſaving nature. Can an opinion which a man takes up concerning Chriſt from the ſcriptures (and caſting himſelf thereupon) ſave him? For it is no more than an opinion or judgment unto a man, unleſs he be in the life and power of the thing itſelf. Then indeed it is truth to him, knowledge in him, right knowledge; otherwiſe it is but knowledge falſely ſo called; knowledge which will not ſubdue his heart to truth, nor hath its ſeat there; but in his head, making him wiſe and able there to oppoſe truth, and ſo bringing him into a ſtate of condemnation, wrath and miſery, beyond the heathen, and making him harder to be wrought upon by the light and power of the truth, than the very heathen. Therefore conſider your ways, O profeſſors of Chriſtianity! and do not deſpiſe the hand which is ſtretched forth to you in the love of God, and in the motion and guidance of his Spirit, who condeſcends to you exceedingly, that he might reach to his own in you, and ſcatter your apprehenſions, imaginations, and conceivings about the meanings of ſcriptures (which are as ſo many chains of death and darkneſs upon you) that ye might come to him in whom is life, and who gives life freely to all who come to him. Oh! obſerve what bars were in the way of the ſcribes and Phariſees! They would not come to him that they might have life; nay, indeed, they could not, as they ſtood. There are greater bars in your way; yea, it is harder for many of you to

come to him, than it was for them. My upright deſire to the Lord for you is, that he would remove the ſtumbling-blocks out of your way, that he would batter and knock down the fleſh in you, that he would ſtrip you of all your knowledge of ſcriptures according to the fleſh, that ye might be made by him capable of knowing and receiving things according to the Spirit, and then ye will know how to underſtand, honour, and make uſe of the letter alſo; but till then ye cannot but make uſe of it both againſt your own ſouls, and againſt Chriſt and his truth.

And then for ſetting up a natural principle, we are further from that than ye are aware. For we were as ſhy of this, and jealous that it was a natural principle, as ye can be, and ſtarted from it, divers of us, till the Lord, by his eternal power, and demonſtration of his Spirit, reached our hearts, and ſhewed us that it was the ſeed of the kingdom (even the root of all the ſpiritual life, that either we ourſelves formerly, or ever any elſe received at any time) and gave us the ſight of the things of the kingdom in it, and at length wrought that in us, and for us, by it, which never was wrought in us before, and which can be wrought by nothing elſe but the power of the Spirit. Now having certainly felt and known the thing in our own hearts, and having alſo ſeen the ſnares and nets which the enemy lays for you, whereby he keeps you from the true bread, and from the water and wine of the kingdom (even as he kept us formerly), how can we hold our peace, but witneſs to you (in the love and drawings of the Spirit of the Lord) of the truth, life, and power which we have felt in Jeſus, though ye become our enemies therefore? Nor do we this to bring you to another opinion, or outward way (that is not our end); but that ye might feel the thing itſelf, and know aſſuredly what is the truth, in that which never was deceived itſelf, nor ever deceived any; nor will ſuffer any to be deceived who are joined to it, and abide in it. Oh! why ſhould ye wander in the dark opinions and uncertainties of the night? Why ſhould ye not rather come to that wherein the light of the day ſprings, and out of which it ſhines? And can the natural man (who hath his eyes) be deceived about the light of the natural day? Doth he not know the light of the day, both from the lights, and alſo from the darkneſs of the night? Ten thouſand times more certain and inwardly ſatisfied is he, who is born of the ſpiritual day, brought forth in the light thereof, and who ſpiritually ſees, lives, and walks therein. So that there is no doubt in him who is grown up into the thing; but he hath the aſſurance of faith (which is far above the aſſurance of outward ſenſe or reaſon) and the aſſurance of underſtanding. Oh! bleſſed is he who hath an eye to ſee, an ear to hear, an heart to underſtand, the things which God hath revealed by his Spirit in this our day, the living way which he hath now made manifeſt, the principle of life that he hath raiſed out of the grave of death. But he that reproacheth and ſpeaketh evil of this (that will neither enter in himſelf, nor ſuffer others) he is far from receiving the bleſſing or bleſſedneſs of this ſeed; but groweth up

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in the wrong nature and ſpirit, the end whereof is to be burned, with all that is in union with it, and groweth up from it. Therefore come out from that ſpirit; come out of that dark mind and nature, which never ſaw, nor can ſee the truth; but ſetteth up opinions and appearances of things inſtead of it; and receive the anointing which is given with and in the ſeed, which is raiſed in ſome, and viſited in many, in this day of the Lord's love and tender mercy; to whom the living, the ſenſible, the redeemed ſing praiſes, and on whom they wait, for the further manifeſting of his power and glory in them daily more and more.

Now, friends, if ye will know aright, or believe aright, ye muſt know and believe in him, who was with the Father before the world was; who was the Saviour, the Jeſus, the Chriſt, from everlaſting. For what makes him ſo? Is it not his nature? Is it not the power of ſalvation in him? His taking up a body made no alteration in him, added nothing to him; only it was neceſſary that he ſhould take it up, to fulfill the will in it, and to offer it up a ſacrifice in his own life and Spirit to the Father. This we firmly believe; and this alſo we cannot but ſay further, that the virtue, the value, the worth, the excellency of what was done by him in the body, was not of the body, but it was in him before time, in time, and will be after time, and for ever: yea, it is he to whom the name Jeſus and Chriſt did of right belong before he took up the body: and he only put forth in the body the ſaving virtue which he had before, which belonged to the nature, to the anointing in him, whether ever he had ſaved any with it or no. And this virtue, this life, this Spirit, this nature of his, is the food, the righteouſneſs, the garment of life and ſalvation, which he (through the death of the body) made and prepared a living way for the ſeed to come to, to feed on, and be cloathed with. I can hardly ſtop ſpeaking of theſe things for your ſakes, that through my words (or the words of whom the Lord ſhall pleaſe) ye might come to feel that which is able to give you the holy underſtanding, and might come to the true ſenſe and experience of the truth itſelf, and might ſee who hath blinded you, and how he hath blinded you, and fed you with huſks and dry food, inſtead of that which hath the true living ſap in it. But while ye ſee and judge in that which is wrong, ye muſt needs judge amiſs both of yourſelves and others, and alſo of the truth itſelf, and of the words ſpoken, either formerly or now, concerning it, whereby ye expoſe and bring yourſelves under the righteous judgment of the truth itſelf, even of the Son, and the light of his day, which hath power from the Father to judge all falſe appearances, deceits, and deceivers.

POSTSCRIPT.

IT hath pleaſed the Lord, as he manifeſted his Chriſt glorioufly before the apoſtaſy, ſo to manifeſt him ſo again. For he was not only born (in the fleſh) of the virgin Mary; but he was alſo born in the Spirit of the woman cloathed with the ſun, which had the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve ſtars. She alſo brought forth the man-child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron, *Rev.* xii.

Now of this appearance and return of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and his freſh bringing forth of his life and power in his body, the church, there are many witneſſes, who have ſeen, felt, and taſted thereof, with the eyes and ſenſes which are of God, and of the new-birth. And of this (in the love and good-will of God, and from the drawings and requirings of his Spirit) they bear witneſs to others, that they alſo might come to ſee the glory and brightneſs of his day, and rejoice therein. For indeed it is a glorious day inwardly in ſpirit, to thoſe that are quickened and gathered to the living Shepherd and Biſhop of the ſoul, by the eternal arm of his power. And happy is the eye that ſees the things that they ſee, and the ear that hears what they hear, and the heart which underſtands the things which God hath revealed in and unto them by his Spirit.

Glorious was the appearance of Chriſt in the fleſh; but there were blocks in the way of the Jews, that they could not know, own, believe and receive him. And glorious is the adminiſtration of his life in Spirit, in this day of his power; but there are alſo blocks lying in the way of them to whom it is ſent, which cauſe them to ſtumble at it, and keep them both from letting it into them, and alſo from giving up to it. But bleſſed was he who was not offended in Chriſt then, and bleſſed is he who is not offended at him now. For he that is offended at him, who is life, and gives life, ſtumbling at the preſent way of diſpenſation which God hath choſen to give it out by, how ſhall he live? This is the cauſe that ſo many poor hearts lie mourning and grovelling on the earth, groaning becauſe of their ſins, fearing becauſe of the ſtrength of the enemy, and the corruptions of their own hearts, which are continually ready to betray them into his hands; becauſe they know not him who hath ſtretched out his arm, and is come in his power to deliver; but are prejudiced againſt the way wherein he hath and doth deliver. Yea, they know not his voice who calls, *Come unto me; I am the reſurrection and the life. He that believeth in me, ſhall receive my ſtrength; and though he were ever ſo weak, ſhall become as David; and though ever ſo unclean, ſhall find the waters which ſpring from my well to cleanſe him, and nouriſh him to life everlaſting.*

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How tenderly did Chriſt viſit the Jews in the days of his fleſh? How powerfully, and in the true authority of God, did he preach among them? What mighty works did he ſhew? And yet they could not believe. Why ſo? The enemy had entered them with his temptations, had got ſomewhat into their minds of a contrary nature, to keep out thereby the ſenſe, knowledge, and acknowledgment of him. So that when their hearts were even overcome with his power and ſweet precious doctrine, and ready to yield that this was he, this was the Chriſt indeed, then the enemy raiſed up ſome argument or other to prejudice them againſt him, that he might thereby beat them off, and drive them back again from owning or receiving him. *This man is not of God*, ſay ſome; *for he keepeth not the ſabbath.* He cannot be a prophet, ſay others, becauſe *he is of Galilee, out of which no prophet ariſeth* He *cannot* be Chriſt, ſaith a third ſort, becauſe *we know whence he is; but when Chriſt cometh, no man knoweth whence he is.* He is not holy, ſtrict, and zealous, according to the law, ſay others; but a looſe perſon, *a man gluttonous, and a wine-bibber; a friend of publicans and ſinners*; one who teacheth not his diſciples to faſt and pray (as the Phariſees did theirs, and John, who was generally looked upon as a prophet, did his), but juſtifieth them in plucking the ears of corn on the ſabbath-day, and ſo thereby rather encouraging them to break it, than ſtrictly to obſerve and keep it according to God's law. He is a *blaſphemer*, ſay ſome (ſpeaks moſt horrid blaſphemy) *making himſelf equal with God.* He reproacheth the moſt ſtrict and zealous men that we have (even our teachers and interpreters of the law and prophets) calling them *hypocrites, painted ſepulchres, blind guides*, &c. and pronounceth woe upon woe againſt them. And thoſe that are the children of Abraham he calls the children of the devil; and ſaith, *He that committeth ſin, is the ſervant of ſin; but if the Son* (meaning himſelf) *make you free, ye ſhall be free indeed.* And if we will have life in us, we muſt believe in him, and eat his fleſh, and drink his blood. (Did ever Moſes, or any of the prophets, teach ſuch doctrine?) Again, he ſaith, *If a man keep my ſaying, he ſhall never ſee death*; whereas Abraham and the prophets (who believed God, and kept his ſayings) are all dead. This made them even conclude he had a devil, *John* viii. 52. So how could they underſtand him when he ſaid, he was *the good ſhepherd, and the door*, &c. and *that all that ever came before him were thieves and robbers*; would they not look upon this as witneſſing of himſelf, and endeavouring to ſet up himſelf? And when he ſaid, *Verily, verily, before Abraham was, I am*; were they not ready to ſtone him, for ſpeaking a falſe and impoſſible thing, as it ſeemed to them; he manifeſtly being not yet fifty years old? But ſuppoſe it to be true that he was before Abraham, how then could he be the Meſſiah, who was to come of Abraham, and out of the loins of David, according to the ſcriptures? And then for his miracles, having beforehand concluded that he was a bad man, a ſinner, a breaker of the ſabbath, a blaſphemer, a deceiver of the people, &c. how eaſy was it for them to harden themſelves againſt them,

and

and to infer that he wrought not theſe things by the power of God, but by the aid and aſſiſtance of the devil, to overthrow the laws and ordinances of Moſes, and to ſet up himſelf and his new doctrine by? Indeed many (and ſome ſeemingly ſtrong and unanſwerable) were the exceptions which the wiſdom and underſtanding in them (which was out of the life and power of truth) formed againſt Chriſt, whereby they juſtified themſelves in their refuſal of him, who was ſealed and ſent of the Father, and ſo excluded themſelves the kingdom, and the righteouſneſs thereof.

This is paſt, and they can condemn them now, who themſelves are acting over again the ſame thing in ſpirit. It pleaſeth the Lord thus to ſuffer things to be, ſtill ſo to give forth the diſpenſations of his life, as they alone that are in ſome meaſure of his life can diſcern them. And the ſame ſpirit (under a new guiſe) ſtill oppoſeth truth in its preſent appearance and diſpenſation, and ſtirreth men up to fight and blaſpheme that holy name and power, which they that believe in are ſaved and ſanctified by. Well, what ſhall I ſay to you? Oh! that ye could diſcern ſpirits! Oh! that ye could ſee what ſpirit ye are of, and whom ye ſerve, in oppoſing the preſent diſpenſation of life! Oh! that ye could ſee how ye read ſcriptures out of that which wrote them, and bend them againſt that which wrote them, making yourſelves wiſe and ſtrong in a wrong wiſdom and knowledge againſt the Lord, and againſt his Chriſt, whom he hath ſet upon his holy hill of Sion, and who appeareth there, though you ſee it not. For Sion is not now literal, or after the fleſh (the day is come, the ſhadows are gone); but Sion is the holy hill of God in Spirit, upon which the heavenly Jeruſalem was built, which is revealed, come down, and coming down from heaven, and many of the heavenly citizens dwell there already, and more are coming thither to dwell; for even from the eaſt, weſt, north, and ſouth, ſhall the gathering be, to ſit with Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob in the kingdom which cannot be ſhaken; which kingdom was received by the Chriſtians formerly before the apoſtaſy, and is now received again, bleſſed be his name who lives and reigns in power over all the ſpirits of darkneſs and deceit, maintaining his pure life and truth in the hearts of his children, in deſpite of them all.

But why ſhould you thus err in heart from the pure truth? Why ſhould you not open to him that knocks in his holy power, and in the demonſtrations of his Spirit to your conſcience? Why ſhould a ſubtil device of the deceiver be let in and hugged by you, to cauſe you to thruſt him back from your hearts who is the Word of eternal life, and with whom are the words of eternal life? The Lord God diſcover the deep deceits of the enemy to you, where he captivateth your hearts and underſtandings, that it may not be always ſaid of you, as it was of the Jews, *he came unto his own, and his own received him not!* But to as many as received him, he gave power in the day of his fleſh; and he giveth much more power to them that receive him in ſpirit (in the day of his Spirit) to become the ſons of God. And becauſe they are ſons, he poureth out abundantly of his Spirit upon

upon them; and he that hath the Spirit, hath the Son; and he that hath the Son, hath life: but he that hath not the Son (but blaſphemeth the appearance and light of his Spirit) hath not life; but is yet in that wiſdom and knowledge which is death, and which keeps him dead.

Now the Lord of his tender mercy make you ſenſible of, and pardon your oppoſing and reſiſting, his truth; and alſo cauſe the light of life to ſhine in your hearts, quickening and guiding you thereby out of the land of death and darkneſs, into the holy land of life; that all that ſincerely breathe after truth may (through the faithful travel) come to ſit down, dwell, and feed together in it, in the one power, in the one life, in the one Holy Spirit, where is pure reſt and peace, perfect joy and ſatisfaction for evermore. Amen.

Some QUERIES

CONCERNING

CHRIST, and his APPEARANCES; his taking upon him our Fleſh: As alſo concerning his Fleſh and Blood, and our being formed thereof, and feeding thereon.

Query 1. WHETHER there was not a neceſſity of Chriſt's taking upon him our fleſh, for the redemption of thoſe that had ſinned, and the ſatisfaction of the juſtice offended?

Query 2. Whether the Father did not accordingly prepare a body for him, to do his will in all things in; and particularly to offer up to him the acceptable ſacrifice for the ſins of the whole world?

Query 3. Whether it was not neceſſary, in this reſpect alſo, that Chriſt ſhould take upon him our fleſh, that he might have experience of our temptations and infirmities, and become a merciful and faithful high-prieſt and interceſſor for us?

Query 4. Wherein lay the value and worth of his ſacrifice, and of all he did? Did it lie chiefly on the thing done, or in the life wherein he did it, in that he did it in the pure faith and obedience to the Father? He became obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs; and he through the eternal Spirit offered himſelf without ſpot to God?

Query

Query 5. What was he, for whom the Father prepared a body, and who took it up to do the will, and did the will in it? Was he not the arm of God, the power of God, the Saviour and ſalvation of God, the Jeſus and Chriſt of God?

Query 6. To whom do the names and titles Jeſus and Chriſt chiefly and in the firſt place belong? Do they belong to the body which was taken by him, or to him who took the body? The body hath its nature and properties, and the eternal Word, or Son of God (the pure ſpotleſs Lamb, the fountain of innocency) its nature and properties. Now the query is, which was the appointed Saviour of the Father? Which was the anointed of the Father, chiefly, and in the firſt place? Whether the body prepared, or he for whom the body was prepared, to do the will, and offer up the acceptable ſacrifice in?

Query 7. Which is Chriſt's fleſh and blood which we are to partake of, whereof we are to be formed, which we are to eat and drink, and which is meat and drink indeed, nouriſhing to life everlaſting? Is it the fleſh and blood of the body, which was prepared for, and taken by him, wherein he tabernacled and appeared? Or is it the fleſh and blood of him, who took, tabernacled, and appeared in the body? For that which he took upon him was our garment, even the fleſh and blood of our nature, which is of an earthly periſhing nature; but he is of an eternal nature, and his fleſh, and blood, and bones are of his nature. Now as the life and nature which is begotten in his, is ſpiritual; ſo that which feeds, and is the nouriſhment of it, muſt needs be of a ſpiritual and eternal nature.

Query 8. What is the bread which came down from heaven? Is not the bread and the fleſh all one? Outwardly-viſible fleſh and blood was not in heaven, nor came down from heaven; but the bread of life did come down from heaven, which the heavenly birth feeds on and lives by. For that which redeems, that which is Jeſus (the Saviour) came down from heaven, and took upon him a body of fleſh here on earth, in which he manifeſted himſelf as king, prieſt, and prophet, and did the work appointed him by the Father, *John* xvii. 1, *&c.*

Query 9. What was that which ſaved people outwardly from their outward infirmities and diſeaſes, while Chriſt was on earth in that body? Was it the body, or the life, power, and Spirit of the Father within the body, and manifeſt through the body? And can any thing loſs ſave inwardly? Now that which ſaves, that which hath the virtue and power of ſalvation in it, that the eye of faith is to fix upon, and not to ſtick or ſtop in that through which the life works it.

Query 10. Who was he that humbled himſelf, that made himſelf of no reputation, that took upon him the form of a ſervant, and was made in the likeneſs of men, and found in faſhion (or habit) as a man? Was it the body of fleſh, or was it he that was glorified of the Father before the world was? And who is to have the honour and exaltation? At whoſe name is every knee

to

to bow? Is not the reward to him who laid down his glory to take upon him the body of fleſh, and appear in it, that he might honour, glorify and fulfill the will of his Father?

Query 11. Are not the children and he of one? Are not he and they of the ſame ſtock? (*Both he that ſanctifieth, and they who are ſanctified, are all of one*, Heb. ii. 11.) Is it not from thence that he is not aſhamed to call them brethren, even becauſe he finds the nature, Spirit, and life of his Father in them? What makes a child to God? Is it not the being begotten of the Father, and born of the Spirit? And that which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit. Now mark: have we the denomination and relation with Chriſt from that which is ſpiritual, and hath Chriſt himſelf the name from or becauſe of the body of fleſh? Nay, nay; the name Chriſt was from the anointing which was in the body, which ran into and filled the veſſel. It is true, the body, in and by the union, partakes with him of his name; but the name belongs chiefly and moſt properly to the treaſure in the veſſel.

Query 12. What is it to put on Chriſt, or what is the putting on of Chriſt? Is it the putting on of that body of fleſh? Or the putting on a belief concerning him, according to what is ſaid of him in ſcripture? Or is it not rather a putting on of his nature, his ſeed, his Spirit, his life, wherewith the ſouls of thoſe that are born from above are cloathed, as the body is with a garment?

Query 13. Who was it that ſaid, I am the reſurrection and the life? Was it not Chriſt? And what did he ſay it concerning? Did he ſay it concerning the body, or did he ſay it concerning the power and virtue of the Father which was in the body? Did he not ſay it concerning that which had the power of life in it before it took up the body, and had alſo the power of life while it was in the body? yea, and could raiſe up not only other bodies, but that alſo after it had laid it down? For after it was laid in the grave, he could raiſe it up, and take it on again, as well as he did at firſt, when it was firſt prepared, *John* x. 17, 18.

Query 14. If I, or any one elſe, have felt the ſaving arm of the Lord revealed in us; if we have felt a meaſure of the ſame life, power, and anointing revealed in our veſſels as was revealed in his, is it not of the ſame nature? Is it not the ſame thing? Is not Chriſt the ſeed? And is not this ſeed ſown in the heart? Now if this ſeed ſpring and grow up in me into a ſpiritual ſhape or form (though it be but of a babe), is not Chriſt then formed in me? If I be ingrafted into, and grow up in it, am I not ingrafted into Chriſt (the true olive-tree, the true vine) and do I not grow up in him? And is not this the ſame Chriſt that took upon him the body of fleſh, and offered it without the gates of Jeruſalem? Is there any more than one, or is there any other than he? Is Chriſt divided? Is there one Chriſt within, and another without? He that knoweth the leaſt meaſure of the thing, doth he not know the thing in ſome meaſure? And he that is in the leaſt meaſure of the thing, is he not in the thing? He that knoweth the Son, doth

he not know the Father? And he that knoweth the Spirit, doth he not alſo know the Son? And he that is in the Spirit, is he not in the Son? For they are one nature and being. A man may have notions of the one, and not of the other; but their nature, their being, their life, their virtue is inſeparable. And as Chriſt ſaid concerning the Father, That he was in the Father, and the Father in him; and that he that ſaw him, ſaw the Father; ſo may it not be as truly affirmed (in the true ſenſe and underſtanding of life) concerning Chriſt, that he is in the Spirit, and the Spirit in him; and that he that ſeeth the Spirit, ſeeth him; and he that ſeeth him ſeeth the Spirit? For he is the Spirit, according to that ſcripture, 2 *Cor.* iii. 17. *Now the Lord is that Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.* What to do? Why, to ſee and read within the veil, and to behold the glory of the Lord, which is revealed there; which they whom the veil was over formerly, or whom the veil is over now, have not liberty to do. Here is confuſion and impoſſibility to man's wiſdom; that Chriſt ſhould be all one with the Spirit; that Chriſt ſhould ſend the Spirit in his name, and alſo himſelf be the Spirit whom he ſends. (This is an hard ſaying, who can bear it?) And yet this confuſion to man, is God's wiſdom, and precious in their eye who are taught of him.

For it is one and the ſame Chriſt that was ſignified in types and ſhadows under the law, revealed in the fulneſs of time in that prepared body, and afterwards in Spirit. Now after he was aſcended, he received the Spirit ſo as he had not received him before; and ſo having received the promiſe of the Father, he ſo diſpenſeth the Spirit to his brethren and diſciples, as it had not been diſpenſed before. Indeed he comforted and refreſhed his people under the law by his Holy Spirit, which was their inſtructor then, *Neh.* ix. 20. and taught them the things of God under types, ſhadows, and reſemblances. When he came in the body, he choſe out diſciples, whom he taught the things of the kingdom, and was a refreſher and comforter of them therein. And was not this another comforter than thoſe had under the law? Had the Jews before ever any ſuch comforter, as Chriſt was to his diſciples in his bodily preſence? Now when he aſcends, he receives the Spirit from the Father, as the Father had promiſed him; and having ſo received him, he ſends him to them for their comforter. And may not this juſtly be termed another comforter than Chriſt was in his bodily preſence? And yet is it not alſo the ſame Spirit of life, that had been with them in that body? So that it is another in the way of adminiſtration, but the ſame in ſubſtance; even the Word which was from the beginning, the Spirit which was from everlaſting; and to everlaſting there is no other.

Now as the Father ſent the Son, and yet was with and in the Son; ſo the Son ſending the Spirit, he alſo is with and in the Spirit. And as it is the Father's will, that the ſame honour be given to the Son as is given to him; ſo it is the Son's pleaſure, that the ſame honour be given to his Spirit as is given to him.... Yea, as he that will worſhip the Father, muſt wor-

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ſhip the Son, muſt come to him in the Son, muſt appear before him in the Son, muſt reverence and kiſs the Son; ſo he that will come to Chriſt, will worſhip him, muſt come to him in the Spirit, muſt bow to him in the Spirit. Yea, he that will know and worſhip Chriſt in his fulneſs (in the majeſty of his glory, dominion, and power), muſt learn to bow at the loweſt appearance of his light and Spirit, even at the very feet of Jeſus; for that is the loweſt part of the body.

Query 15. Did not the bridegroom go away, as to his appearance in fleſh, that he might come again in Spirit? Did not the apoſtles, who knew his appearance in fleſh, and his tabernacling among them, know alſo afterwards his appearance in Spirit, and his tabernacling in them? And were not their hearts filled with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory, becauſe of the preſence of the bridegroom? Did they not know the man-child born and brought forth in Spirit, as really as ever he was born and brought forth in fleſh? Yea, did they not travail and help to bring him forth? Were there not many in that day, who could ſay concerning the ſpiritual and inward appearance of the bridegroom, We know that the Son of God, the eternal life, the pure power and wiſdom of the Father, is come? Did they not receive from him the underſtanding which he gives in and by his coming? Yea, were they not in him that is true, even in Jeſus Chriſt the Son, who is the true God, and life eternal? (1 *John* v. 20.) Had they not received the kingdom which could not be ſhaken? And did they never ſee and converſe with the King in the kingdom? Nay, did not he walk in them and they in him, and he ſup with them and they with him, in the kingdom? Oh! that ye could read in Spirit! Oh! that ye did receive that meaſure of life from Chriſt, which the Father hath allotted you, that ye might read therein; but the letter (read out of the Spirit) darkeneth and killeth.

Query 16. What is the laver of regeneration, or the water wherewith the *ſoul* is waſhed, and whereof a man is born again? Is it outward or inward? Is it the water which ran out of the ſide of the natural body, when it was pierced with a ſpear? Or the water which ſprings from the fountain of life, the water which floweth from the Spirit? What are the waters which corrupt, mud, and defile the mind? Are they outward waters? And what are the waters which purify and cleanſe it? Can they be of a lower nature than ſpiritual? What are the waters which anſwer the thirſt of the ſoul after life, after purity, after ſalvation; that refreſh and glad the heart of him that drinketh thereof? Are they not from the pure river, clear as chryſtal, which runs from the throne? And if the water which cleanſeth and nouriſheth the *ſoul* be ſpiritual; can the fleſh and blood (which falleth not more of the water in its virtues, properties, and operations) be inferior to it in nature and kind?

Query 17. Can outward blood cleanſe the conſcience? Ye that are ſpiritual conſider. Can outward water waſh the *ſoul* clean? Ye that have ever felt the blood of ſprinkling from the Lord upon your conſciences, and your

conſciences cleanſed thereby; did ye ever feel it to be outward? It is one thing what a man apprehends (in the way of notion) from the letter concerning the things of God, and another thing what a man feels in Spirit.

Query 18. Seeing the apoſtle ſpeaks of purifying the heavenly things themſelves, *Hebr.* ix. 23. it would ſeriouſly be inquired into, and the Lord waited on, to know what nature theſe ſacrifices muſt be of, which cleanſe the heavenly things? Whether they muſt not of neceſſity be heavenly? If ſo, then whether was it the fleſh and blood of the veil, or the fleſh and blood within the veil? Whether was it the fleſh and blood of the outward earthly nature, or the fleſh and blood of the inward ſpiritual nature? Whether was it the fleſh and blood which Chriſt took of the firſt Adam's nature, or the fleſh and blood of the ſecond Adam's nature?

Query 19. What is that, wherein they that are in the Spirit, behold as in a glaſs, with open face, the glory of the Lord? Is it not Chriſt? And how is Chriſt ſo? Is it not as he is made manifeſt in Spirit? Doth he know Chriſt aright, or believe in him aright, that knoweth him according to his bodily appearance (that can relate, and firmly believe, what he did therein) or he that knoweth and believeth in his Spirit and power? Henceforth know we no man after the fleſh; no not Chriſt (ſaith the apoſtle), though we have known him ſo. What meaneth that? The ſame thing may be known ſeveral ways: outwardly, inwardly; according to the *fleſh*, according to the *Spirit*. Now, if ye are of the Spirit, live in the Spirit; if ye live in the Spirit, know in the Spirit the things of God after the Spirit, as the Spirit reveals, as that which is born of God receives; and not as the wiſdom, underſtanding, reaſon, and fleſh of man can receive; and then ye will come into fellowſhip with Chriſt, both in his death and reſurrection, and know indeed the reſurrection both of the life and of the body: which to know, and be able to acknowledge in Jeſus, is very precious.

Query 20. Hath not Chriſt made us kings and prieſts to God, even his Father? What is it that is the king and prieſt in us? And if we be prieſts, muſt we not have ſomewhat to offer? What have we to offer? And what makes our ſacrifices ſavoury and acceptable? Is it not that of his Spirit, that of his life, which is in them? Is it not the faith, the love, the obedience (which are all of him) wherein they are offered? If we ſhould give our bodies to be burned (in the way of teſtifying to truth), without this would they be accepted? If we give but a cup of cold water in this, is it not accepted?

Now, is the life, the faith, the obedience of the Son, the thing which is of value in us? And was it not the ſame which was of value in him? What did the Father require of the Son, for ſatisfaction for Adam's diſobedience? Was it not the obedience of the ſecond Adam, which weighed down the tranſgreſſion and diſobedience of the firſt? Doth not this make all righteous (who are of him, and found in his nature), as the tranſgreſſion of the firſt made all unrighteous? *Rom.* v. 19. Sacrifice and offering thou

wouldſt

wouldſt not. Lo I come to do thy will, O God! (He taketh away the firſt, that he may eſtabliſh the ſecond.) By the which will we are ſanctified, thro' the offering of the body of Jeſus Chriſt once for all, *Heb.* x. 9, 10. What can be plainer to that which hath truth's ear? So, by truth manifeſted in the heart, there is nothing denied of what is ſaid concerning Chriſt in ſcripture, but every thing owned, believed, and received in its proper place.

Query 21. Who is the captain of our ſalvation? Who is it that girdeth himſelf with might, riding on conquering and to conquer all the enemies of the ſoul? Is it not the Lamb? Is it not Chriſt? Is it not he whoſe name is called the *Word of God?* And yet how can it be he? Is not he to ſit at God's right hand, until his enemies be made his footſtool?

Query 22. What is the water and Spirit, whereof a man muſt be born again, or he cannot ſee the kingdom of God? Is it Chriſt's fleſh and blood or no? His fleſh ſaw no corruption; and incorruptible fleſh and blood may enter the kingdom, though corruptible cannot.

Query 23. What did all the types, veils, and ſhadows under the law ſignify? Did they ſignify another veil? Did they ſignify or ſhadow out that which was outward? Or did they ſhadow out and ſignify that inward life, virtue, and ſaving power, which was the ſubſtance of all?

Query 24. Is not the ſubſtance, the life, the anointing called Chriſt, where-ever it is found? Doth not the name belong to the whole body (and every member in the body) as well as to the head? Are they not all of one; yea, all one in the anointing? Was not this the great deſire of his heart to the Father, that they all might be one, even as the Father and Chriſt were one, *John* xvii. 21. 23. And ſo being one in the ſame Spirit (one in the ſame life, one in the ſame divine nature, 2 *Pet.* i. 4. even partakers of God's holineſs, *Heb.* xii. 10.) Chriſt is not aſhamed to call them brethren, *Heb.* ii. 11. nor is the apoſtle aſhamed to give them the name *Chriſt* together with him, 1 *Cor.* xii. 12. The body is the ſame with the head; one and the ſame in nature; and doth not the name belong to the nature in the whole? So that the name is not given to the veſſel, but to the nature, to the heavenly treaſure, to that which is of him in the veſſel, to that which the Lord from heaven begets in his own image and likeneſs, of his own ſubſtance, of his own ſeed, of his own Spirit and pure life.

Query 25. What was that live coal from the altar, whereby the prophet Iſaiah's iniquity was taken away, and his ſin purged? *Iſa.* vi. 6, 7. Can any thing purge away ſin, but the blood of Chriſt?

Query 26. What are the leaves of the tree of life, which are for the healing of the nations? Is not Chriſt the tree of life? Is there any other tree of life beſides him? Is there any other healer? And what do theſe leaves of the tree of life heal the nations of? Do they not heal them of their ſins, and of the ſickneſſes and diſtempers of their ſouls becauſe of

their

their ſins? And have theſe leaves any of the blood of Chriſt in them or no?

Query 27. Is not Chriſt the true vine, the true olive-tree; the living vine, the living olive-tree; the ſpiritual vine, the ſpiritual olive-tree; into which all the ſpiritually-living are ingrafted? As the Father is the huſbandman; ſo is not the Son the vine? And hath not this ſpiritual this eternal vine in it juice and ſap of an eternal nature? And is not this ſap its blood?

Query 28. Is there not a choice vine, to which the foal and aſs's colt of the ſeed of Judah is tied? And are not the garments and clothes of the true Jews waſhed in the wine, and in the blood of the grapes of this vine? *Gen.* xlix. 11.

Query 29. What is that which the earthly nature ſlays? And what is the blood which the earthly nature ſhall diſcloſe, and the ſlain which it ſhall no more cover?

Query 30. What are the robes which are waſhed and made white in the blood of the Lamb? And how are they waſhed and made white therein? And what is the blood (of what nature? earthly or ſpiritual?) wherein they are waſhed and made white?

Query 31. What is it to have, or how come we to have, fellowſhip with Chriſt in his death, and to ſuffer and be crucified with him? Is it by having our natural bodies crucified on the ſame croſs of wood (or ſome ſuch-like one) as his body was crucified on? Or by having the fleſhly nature crucified, ſubdued, and worn out of our ſouls, minds, ſpirits, *&c.* by the power of the Spirit? *Rom.* viii. 13. Now if the fleſh we are to put off, be of ſuch a nature and kind; to wit, inwardly and ſpiritually corrupt; muſt not the fleſh of Chriſt, which we are to put on inſtead thereof, be of as deep, inward, and ſpiritual a nature? What is the fleſh whereof we are to be uncloathed, before we can be cloathed with Chriſt? Is it outward or bodily? And what is Chriſt's fleſh we are to put on? Is that any more outward or bodily, than that which we are to put off?

Query 32. Is not the fleſh and blood, which they that have eternal life feed on, and which nouriſheth them up to life eternal (they continuing to feed thereon, and not feeding afterwards on ſtrange fleſh, and ſtrange blood); I ſay, is not this fleſh and blood Spirit and life? For that is it which profiteth, *John* vi. 63. Is it not the fleſh and blood of the word? Was not the word made fleſh? And did not the word, who was made fleſh, dwell and appear in a tabernacle of fleſh, and cauſe the glory of his own divine fleſh, to ſhine through that earthly fleſh? Oh! read and conſider, that ye who have ſtumbled and murmured againſt the truth, may ſtumble or murmur no more, but now at length receive the pure and precious doctrine thereof (and ſo come to witneſs the fulfilling of that promiſe, *Iſa.* xxix. 18.—24.), and praiſe him who giveth underſtanding.

Query

Query 33. Is not the true church, fleſh of Chriſt's fleſh, and bone of his bone? Is not the falſe, or antichriſtian church, fleſh of antichriſt's fleſh, and bone of antichriſt's bone? What is the fleſh of the ſpiritual whore, which is to be ſtripped naked and burnt with fire? Shall ever the church, which is of Chriſt's fleſh, be ſtripped naked and burnt with fire? Nay, doth not his fleſh make able to abide the devouring fire, and to dwell with the everlaſting burnings?

Query 34. What is the pure milk of the word, which is milked out to the babes from the pure breaſt? And what is the breaſt from which it is milked out? Is it of the fleſh of Chriſt or no?

Query 35. Are not the wicked of the ſeed and fleſh of the ſerpent? Is not that the body of fleſh, of ſin, of death, which is to be put off? And are not they who are renewed in ſpirit, of the ſeed and fleſh of Chriſt? Is not that the body or garment of holineſs, of righteouſneſs, of life, which is to be put on?

Query 36. Is it not as neceſſary that the eternal word be made fleſh inwardly, that ſo the children may feed on him, as it was for him to take on him an outward body of fleſh, to ſuffer and die for them, and to fulfil all righteouſneſs, both of the law of the letter, and of the law of the Spirit in?

Query 37. Is there not that which ſpiritually is called Sodom and Egypt? And do not they which dwell there, inſtead of eating Chriſt's fleſh, and drinking his blood, put his fleſh to pain, crucifying it in and to themſelves, trampling under foot the Son of God, and counting the blood of the covenant an unholy thing? Read the figure. Did not outward Iſrael ſuffer in outward Egypt? Did not juſt Lot ſuffer in Sodom? Doth not the ſpiritual ſeed ſuffer in and by ſpiritual Egypt? Doth not the fleſh of the holy and juſt one ſuffer in and by ſpiritual Sodom?

Query 38. What is that which the Gentile-Chriſtians, who are not Jews inward, circumciſed in heart and ſpirit, who know not the inward temple (the place of the true Jews worſhip, where they worſhip the Father in Spirit and truth), but only worſhip in the outward court, which God hath caſt off, and left out of his meaſure, *Rev.* xi. 2. I ſay, What is that holy city which theſe Gentiles tread under foot forty-two months? Is it the church, which is of the fleſh and bones of Chriſt, or no?

He that knoweth the ſubſtance, the ſeed of the kingdom, the birth of the Spirit, knoweth the fleſh and blood which is of the ſeed. And this fleſh is fleſh indeed, this blood is blood indeed, even the fleſh and blood of the ſeed's nature; but the other was but the fleſh and blood of our nature, which he honoured in taking upon him, in which he did the will, in which he offered up the acceptable ſacrifice; but yet did not give the honour from his own fleſh and blood to it. For the fleſh and blood of our nature, was not his own naturally, but only as he pleaſed to take it upon him and make it his. But that whereof he formeth us (and which he giveth us to

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eat and drink), is the fleſh and blood of his own nature; and this was it wherein was the virtue, and wherein is the virtue, life, and power for ever. Happy! oh! happy is he who is of it, who is taken out of and formed of him (as Eve was of Adam), and ſo becomes fleſh of his fleſh, and bone of his bone. Then will he know the myſtery of life, feed on the thing itſelf, and not ſtumble about appearances and expreſſions, as thoſe that are out of and from the thing itſelf do, through the darkneſs of their mind, and becauſe of their ignorance of the thing ſpoken of in the ſcriptures.

An Incitation to PROFESSORS ſeriouſly to conſider, Whether they or we fail, in the true Acknowledgment and Owning of the CHRIST which died at JERUSALEM:

WE, who are commonly called QUAKERS, being a people whom the Lord hath gathered (out of the wanderings, out of the many profeſſions, out of the ſeveral ſcattered eſtates and conditions, wherein his eye pitied us, and his love found us out) into a meaſure of the eternal reſt; where we have found that life, that power, that manifeſtation of the eternal Spirit, and that redeeming virtue, which we never were before diſtinctly acquainted with; I ſay, having taſted of this, having known this, having felt this, and come to a real enjoyment of it, in ſome degree, in our ſeveral meaſures; we could not poſſibly conceal this treaſure, but in bowels of love (and in the movings of the life and power of the Spirit) have been drawn to teſtify of it to them who are left behind, groveling under the burthen of corruption, and crying out becauſe of the ſin and bondage from the powers of darkneſs, who have in a miſt with-held their eyes from beholding that living virtue, which is able to ſave (and doth ſave, bleſſed be his name) therefrom.

Now this we have often found; That this our teſtimony hath not been received in the ſame Spirit and love wherein it hath gone forth; but the enemy (by his ſubtilty) hath raiſed up jealouſies concerning us, and prejudices againſt us, as if we denied the ſcriptures and ordinances of God, and that Chriſt that died at Jeruſalem; profeſſing him only in words (to win upon others by), but denying him in reality and ſubſtance.

To clear this latter (for my heart is only at this preſent drawn out concerning that), we have ſolemnly profeſſed, in the ſight of the Lord God (who hath given us the knowledge of his Son in life and power) theſe two things.

Firſt,

Firſt, That we do really in our hearts own that Chriſt, who came in the fulneſs of time, in that prepared body, to do the Father's will (his coming into the world, doctrine, miracles, ſufferings, death, reſurrection, &c.) in plainneſs and ſimplicity of heart, according as it is expreſſed in the letter of the ſcriptures.

Secondly, That we own no other Chriſt than that, nor hold forth no other thing for Chriſt, but him who then appeared, and was made manifeſt in fleſh.

Now it would be nakedly enquired into by profeſſors, what is the reaſon that their jealouſies ſtill remain concerning us, and why they are ſtill ſo ready to caſt this upon us? Certainly if they did know and own the ſame thing with us (in the Spirit, and in the power, in the life, and in the love, which is of the truth) this prejudice and theſe hard thoughts could not remain. But if they themſelves do not know Chriſt in the Spirit (but only according to a relation of the letter) no marvel though they miſs both of the Spirit, and of the true intent and meaning of the letter; and likewiſe be liable to claſh againſt the truth, as it is made manifeſt in others.

And indeed the Lord hath ſhewn me in Spirit ſeveral times, that they themſelves are guilty of that very charge (and that he will ſo implead them at his judgment-ſeat) which they caſt upon us, even of denying that Chriſt which died at Jeruſalem to be the Chriſt. For he that owneth the words of ſcripture, as he apprehends or conceives them in the reaſonings of his mind, and doth not wait to have them revealed in the Spirit, keeping out of his own reaſonings and conceivings, and waiting patiently till the Lord open the thing in the Spirit, he ſetteth up his own conceivings, or an image in his mind, of the mind of the Spirit, but miſſeth of the thing itſelf, which alone is known in the Spirit, by them who wait upon the Spirit, there to receive it, and are not haſty to ſet up their own reaſonings and imaginations concerning the thing in the mean time.

No man can in truth call Jeſus the Lord but by the Spirit. But any man that is any thing ſerious, and weighs the ſcriptures in the natural part, may ſo learn to acknowledge his coming into the world, and that he is Lord and king, *&c.* and may thus call him Lord, yea, and kindle a great heat in his affections towards him; but all this (out of the life, out of the Spirit) is but man's image, which he forms in his mind, in his reading the ſcriptures, and obſerving things therefrom. But the true calling Jeſus Lord, is from the feeling of his eternal virtue in the Spirit, and finding the ſcriptures opened to him by the Spirit, in a principle which is above the reaſon, comprehends the reaſon, and confounds and brings it to nothing.

Again; there is no true knowledge of Chriſt, no living knowledge, no ſaving knowledge, no knowledge which hath the eternal virtue in it; but that which is received and retained in a meaſure of light given by God to the creature, in the faith which is the gift, in the grace which is ſupernatural and ſpiritual; whereas the reaſoning part is but natural. And ſuch as have received the

ſpiritual underſtanding, know it to be diſtinct from the natural; and we experimentally find a very clear diſtinction, between ſcriptures ſearched out by the reaſonings of the mind (and ſo practices drawn therefrom) and ſcriptures opened by the Spirit, and felt in the life.

Now that profeſſors generally have not received their knowledge of Chriſt from the Spirit, or from ſcriptures opened in the Spirit (and ſo know not the thing, but only ſuch a relation of the thing as man's reaſoning part may drink in from the letter of the ſcriptures) is manifeſt by this, in that they are not able in ſpirit and underſtanding to diſtinguiſh the thing itſelf from the garment wherewith it was cloathed, though the ſcriptures be very expreſs therein. Speak of Chriſt according to a relation of the letter, there they can ſay ſomewhat; but come to the ſubſtance, come to the ſpirit of the thing, come to the thing itſelf, there they ſtutter and ſtammer, and ſhew plainly that they know not what it is.

Now the ſcriptures do expreſly diſtinguiſh between Chriſt and the garment which he wore; between him that came, and the body in which he came; between the ſubſtance which was veiled, and the veil which veiled it. *Lo! I come; a body haſt thou prepared me.* There is plainly he, and the body in which he came. There was the outward veſſel, and the inward life. This we certainly know, and can never call the bodily garment Chriſt, but that which appeared and dwelt in the body. Now if ye indeed know the Chriſt of God, tell us plainly what that is which appeared in the body? Whether that was not the Chriſt before it took up the body, after it took up the body, and for ever?

And then their confining of Chriſt to that body, plainly manifeſteth that they want the knowledge of him in ſpirit. For Chriſt is the Son of the Father; he is the infinite eternal being, One with the Father, and with the Spirit, and cannot be divided from either; cannot be any-where where they are not, nor can be excluded from any place where they are. He may take up a body, and appear in it; but cannot be confined to be no-where elſe but there; no, not at the very time while he is there. Chriſt, while he was here on earth, yet was not excluded from being in heaven with the Father at the very ſame time; as he himſelf ſaid concerning himſelf, *The Son of man, which is in heaven*, John iii. 13. Nor was the Father excluded from being with him in the body; but the Father was in him, and he in the Father: whereupon he ſaid to Philip, *He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father*, What! did every one that ſaw that body, ſee the Father alſo? Nay, not ſo; but he that ſaw Chriſt, the Son of the living God, whom fleſh and blood revealed not, but the Father only (*Matt.* xvi. 16, 17.) he ſaw the Father alſo.

O Friends! look to your knowledge of Chriſt, and to your faith and knowledge of the ſcriptures, and to your prayers alſo; for it is eaſy miſſing of the living ſubſtance in all theſe, and meeting with a ſhadow; which may pleaſe and make a great ſhew in the earthly part, in the natural underſtanding and affections,

affections, but ſatisfieth not the ſoul, or that which is born after the Spirit, but ſtill the cry there goes out (where the ſoul is awakened) after truth, ſubſtance, life, virtue from God's Spirit in the ſpirit, which it alone can feed upon.

Theſe four things following I am certain of; which he that cometh into the true light, ſhall infallibly experience them there.

Firſt, That nothing can ſave but the knowledge of Chriſt, even of that very Chriſt, and no other, who took upon him the prepared body, and offered it up at Jeruſalem.

Secondly, That no knowledge of Chriſt can ſave but the living knowledge. Not a knowledge of him after the letter (which the carnal part may get much of, and value itſelf much by), but a knowledge of him in the Spirit; which is only given to that which is begotten and born of the Spirit, and only retained by that which abides and remains in the Spirit, and runs not out into the fleſhly reaſonings, imaginings, and conceivings, about the things mentioned in the ſcriptures.

Thirdly, That that man who knoweth not Chriſt in ſpirit, nor keepeth cloſe to him in ſpirit; but (through darkneſs and miſguidance of the ſpirit of deceit) calleth the ſhinings of his light (his reproofs, his checks for that which is evil, and his ſecret motions to that which is good) natural; this man, though he ſeem to own Chriſt ever ſo much according to the letter, yet in truth denies him.

Fourthly, He that denies Chriſt (in his knockings and viſitations of him in his own heart, and before men in the truths which he holds forth by his ſervants and miniſters of his Spirit) him will he deny before his Father in heaven.

Oh! I beſeech you do not trifle about theſe things (for they are exceeding weighty) leſt ye periſh from the way! For miſſing of the Saviour, ye muſt needs alſo miſs of the ſalvation. Oh! that ye knew your ſtate, as God knows it to be, and as it is certainly known and felt, in the meaſure of his life and Holy Spirit, by thoſe which God hath gathered thither, and whoſe eyes he hath opened, and preſerveth open there; glory be to his name therefore: *yea, glory, glory, glory, and everlaſting praiſes be ſung to him throughout all the holy land; yea, in the very heights of Sion, by the ſouls of the redeemed, from henceforth and for evermore, Amen: whoſe mercy, love, grace, wiſdom, power, and rich goodneſs remaineth and endureth for ever; by and in which the redeemed live to his praiſe, who have overcome by the blood of the Lamb, whoſe blood they know what it is, and none elſe knoweth it, but they who feel the ſprinkling and virtue of it. Lo! this is our God, we have waited for him, and how can we but be glad, and rejoice in his ſalvation! Oh! let all that live by the breath of thy power, and drink of thy ſtreams, ſing praiſe unto thee, and exalt thy great and wonderful name for ever and ever.*

Some PROPOSITIONS and CONSIDERATIONS concerning the Nature of Church-Worſhips and Ordinances ſince the Days of the Apoſtles, for the ſake of the Simplicity which hath been long held captive therein.

HE that would know the true ſtate of the church, and ordinances thereof, muſt wait upon God in fear and humility of heart, who alone is able to give the true knowledge and underſtanding of theſe things. And he that cometh to the Spirit, waiteth in the Spirit, and receiveth the true light from the Spirit, he ſhall be able to meaſure ages and generations paſt as with a ſpan, and ſee clearly (in that light) how things were before the apoſtaſy, how while the church was in the wilderneſs, and how things ſhall be again after the apoſtaſy, when the church cometh out of the wilderneſs. She herſelf is the ſame in all; but her ſtate is different, according to the wiſdom and good pleaſure of him who variouſly diſpoſeth of her. One while ſhe is cloathed, appearing in the beauty and glorious dreſs which the Lord had put upon her. Another while ſhe is ſtripped of her outward garments, and the harlot dreſſed therewith, and appearing therein. After which ſeaſon ſhe is adorned again as glorioufly (if not more glorioufly) than before; but whether ever ſhe appears more in thoſe garments wherein the harlot had been dreſſed, and wherein ſhe had long appeared (even all the time of the apoſtaſy) the Lord would be inquired of, and waited on to know. Now to help the tender and upright hearts towards the true ſenſe of theſe things, the Propoſitions and Conſiderations following are given forth, which he that ſincerely waiteth on the Lord, from him may receive the true underſtanding and right acknowledgment of.

1. That upon the coming of Chriſt, and the change of that outward covenant, the diſtinction between the outward Jew and Gentile fell, they becoming all one, as in relation to Chriſt; and then another diſtinction aroſe in relation to the faith, believers becoming Jews now, and unbelievers Gentiles.

2. That theſe true and inward Jews had not only the inward faith, the life, the power, the Spirit; but alſo a miniſtry, ordinances, and gifts of the Spirit relating to their preſent ſtate.

3. That there was a time, after a long and ſharp fight between the true miniſters, who appeared in the true light and power of the true Spirit, and the falſe miniſters, who alſo appeared as miniſters of righteouſneſs, and as in the power of the Spirit, but were not ſuch indeed, but inſtructed by Satan to transform themſelves into a reſemblance and likeneſs of miniſters of righteouſneſs:

righteouſneſs: for though they ſaid they were apoſtles, and ſeemed ſo in appearance; yet their ſpirit (being tried) was found not to be the Spirit of the apoſtles: I ſay, there was a time, when there was a diviſion (or ſeparation) made, between the inward temple and the outward court.

4. That when this diviſion was made, the outward court was given to the Gentiles; not any longer reſerved by God for the true worſhippers, who worſhip in Spirit and truth; but given to the unbelievers, the worſhippers out of the true faith, the worſhippers out of the Spirit, and out of the life.

5. That henceforward (ſince this ſeparation) the believers, or true Jews, are not to be expected in the outward court (in the worſhip thereof, wherein they were found before this ſeparation), but the unbelievers, the Gentiles (who have not the true nature, but at beſt but the appearance of the Jew) are to be expected there, and the true Jew is to be looked for and found more inward.

6. That therefore which allureth to look for God there, and to wait for him in the ways and worſhips of this time of the ſeparation, is not the true Spirit (which rightly guideth the ſimple heart to the place where God appears, and where he is to be waited for); but the wrong ſpirit, who, when he cannot ſtifle the ſimplicity, and hinder it from breathing and ſeeking after God, waits to draw aſide and miſlead it.

7. That the great way of that ſpirit's miſguiding and miſleading the honeſt heart, in its breathing and longing ſtate, is not by a direct taking it off from ſeeking after God; but rather by pointing it to a way to ſeek him in, wherein he once appeared, and was enjoyed, but is now withdrawn from.

8. He that will keep cloſe to God, and not be withdrawn from him, muſt watch to his Spirit, and know the leadings of it, elſe he will not follow the Lamb whitherſoever he goes; but ſtay behind in ſome obſervation or practice which the Lamb is gone out of; and ſo miſs of his leader, and meet (inſtead thereof) with another leader, even the ſpirit of antichriſt, who enters into the outward court, and outward practices, ſo ſoon as ever the Spirit of God hath left them.

9. That God's people, ſince his withdrawing inward, and giving the outward court to the Gentiles, have been much deceived by the antichriſtian ſpirit, and led captive into Babylon; inſomuch as God, when he cometh to overthrow antichriſt, with the Babylon of his building, finds them there, and calls them out from thence. For the light growing low, and the deceit great, and the ſpirit ſubtil; how can the poor, weak, innocent babe eſpy that ſpirit, and eſcape his ſnares, when he tempts to thoſe very paths and ways of worſhip wherein the ſaints had walked and met with God, before the Spirit of the Lord departed out of them and gave them up to the Gentiles?

10. That there is danger to the people of God of not underſtanding his call out of Babylon, but abiding there, through the ſubtil entanglements of the

the falſe ſpirit, who bewitcheth (with the cup of fornication) to make Babylon appear as Sion, her doctrines as the truths of the goſpel, her ordinances and ways of worſhip as the true ordinances and ways of worſhip. For the deceit is exceeding deep, and the myſtery of iniquity very great, following the heart cloſe which the Lord is drawing to depart therefrom; and if the Lord God is not ſtrong and vigilant, who judgeth the whore, ſhe would ſtill keep her hold of the heart; and if the heart be not kept very cloſe to the Lord in the judgment, it cannot come out of Babylon, but will ſtill be entangled and held in ſome part or other of the myſtery of its deceit.

11. Such of the people of God as do not wait to underſtand and receive the full call, and ſo do not follow the Lord perfectly out of that city of abominations; but by her ſubtilties, and inward and outward withcrafts, are held captive therein, and found in any part thereof when the Lord cometh to judge her; ſuch muſt partake of the plagues from the hand of the Lord, who will not ſpare her, nor the ſpirits of his deareſt people who are found there, in the day of his viſitation and righteous judgments.

Therefore come out of her, come out of her, O ye that love your ſouls, and the pure preſence and freſh light of God's countenance! Ye that know what it is to provoke him to jealouſy, and fear the weight of his hand upon your ſpirits; ye that love the holy land, the holy city, and temple of the living God, oh! come out of that impure building, that fleſhly building, thoſe fleſhly ways and worſhips which that ſpirit adorneth, to make them appear as if they were ſpiritual. Oh! depart ye, depart ye, out of your new removes; for they are alſo polluted, and not your reſt; but ſhort of that wherein the reſt, the peace, the preſence of the Lord of life is felt by others, and to be found by you.

And conſider this, if ever ye will come to the holy city, which was once built in the days of the apoſtles, but (ſince the diviſion of it from the outward court) hath been trodden down, and trampled under the feet of the unbelievers, even while they have been worſhipping in the outward court (which God once built and choſe, but afterwards withdrew his Spirit from, and gave up to the unbelievers; I ſay, if ever you will come to this holy city, the holy land wherein it is built, and the holy hill whereon it was founded, ye muſt paſs through the wilderneſs, be exerciſed in the wilderneſs, even till ye are fitted for it; and not ſtrive to raiſe up a building yourſelves in the likeneſs of it; but wait till God hath hewn and prepared the ſtones by his Spirit, and then (by the ſkill of the Spirit) build up his Sion again.

Therefore, in the fear of the Lord, conſider ſeriouſly, meekly, humbly, and brokenly, that the Lord may manifeſt your preſent ſtate and condition unto you, whether ye have not erred in theſe things as well as others, and have not cauſe to repent of your forwardneſs herein, and to acknowledge that your buildings have been raiſed in the forwardneſs of your own ſpirits, and in the confidence of your reaſonings upon ſcripture-words, without feeling

ing the preſence (guidance and holy power) of God's Spirit raiſing up the foundation of many generations, and rearing his own pure houſe upon his own holy mountain.

In the Lord's hand is the time and ſeaſon of building his own houſe. David, though his deſire was approved, yet might not build the outward temple in the time of his choice; but God's time and ſeaſon was to be waited for, both for the firſt building, and for the rebuilding of it. There is likewiſe a ſeaſon for the rebuilding of ſpiritual Sion, after the long captivity it in myſtery Babylon. Now he that is forward, building before the time and ſeaſon of the Spirit, buildeth without the Spirit, and his building is not of the Spirit, but of the nature of Babylon, which is wholly to be departed from, and left behind, in the ſoul's travels and progreſs towards Sion: and whatever is of the nature of Babylon, muſt at length fall with Babylon (in the day of her terrible judgment) if the Lord in mercy do not ſhake it, and cauſe it to fall before.

Therefore, O all profeſſors! awake out of the fleſh and all fleſhly reaſonings, into the Spirit of life; and examine there both your inward and outward buildings, that your loſs be not great, and your anguiſh unutterable in the day of the Lord, when all thoſe buildings, which are raiſed and preſerved in the pure life and power, ſhall ſhine in the beauty and glory of God's Spirit, and the greateſt glory of fleſh and fleſhly buildings fade and wither.

The Sounding of Bowels towards thee, O ENGLAND!

EARLY in the morning, on the 26th day of the Sixth Month, 1660, this, in the freſhneſs and quick ſenſe of life, ſprang up in my heart again and again. O England, England, England! how good had it been for thee, that thou hadſt known and walked in the way of peace!

There is a way of peace for perſons and nations to know and walk in; but every perſon and nation doth not know and walk in this way, but rather in the way of trouble.

Queſt. *What is the way of peace?*

Anſw. It is the way of the pure wiſdom, the way of the light and guidance of God's Spirit, from whom the creature came, and by whom alone it can be rightly ordered. He that waiteth on him for counſel, he that ſubjecteth to, and walketh in his counſel, he walketh in the way of peace.

Queſt. *What is the way of trouble?*

Anſw. The way of a man's own wiſdom and counſel. For a man or nation to do that which is right in their own eyes. This is the way of man, whereby he thinks to eſtabliſh himſelf, and put an end to his troubles; but he errs therein, as in the end he ſtill finds to his woe. Now,

Now, O England! conſider; haſt thou has the guidance of God? Hath the light which hath guided thy ſteps been lighted by him, or by his and thy ſoul's enemy? For there is a ſpirit (of a contrary nature to God) near man, which he ſuddenly taketh counſel of, when his heart is not acquainted with, nor receiveth counſel of the Lord. And this counſellor is the deſtroyer both of perſons and nations, leading them in ways of ruin and ſubverſion, under an appearance of being the proper ways of peace and ſettlement.

It is true of nations, as well as perſons, that what they ſow, that ſhall they alſo reap. God meaſureth out their time unto them, and when that is over, his time of judging and pleading with them comes. And woe is then unto them who have acted in their own wills and wiſdoms, out of the pure counſel and fear of the Lord, wherein they ſhould have ſtood and been guided.

It is a day of trouble and diſtreſs. The weight of the iniquity of this nation begins to be felt upon it. Oh! let every one ſearch and bow before the Lord, under his righteous judgments! that there may be no going on in that which bringeth and will increaſe the judgment; but a turning towards that which intercedes, and opens the ſprings of mercy.

Two things lie heavy on this nation; to wit, a running on in tranſgreſſions of ſeveral kindsag ainſt the Lord (forgetting his tender mercies, with the days of former diſtreſs) and an afflicting others whom he loves, and hath led, and is leading out of tranſgreſſion. Oh! that theſe things might come to an end, that the anger of the Lord might ceaſe, and the ways of his judgments and pleading with this nation be ſtopped; for who can ſtand before him when he riſeth up in controverſy againſt them?

There is but one eye which can rightly ſee the hand and judgments of the Lord; yea, it pleaſeth the Lord ſo to manage them, that only the eye which is of him may ſee them. Man muſt be taken in his wiſdom, and caught in the ſnare of his own underſtanding. He that will ſee the things of God, the ways of God, the counſels of God, the love and ſweetneſs of God (yea, the very judgments of God) muſt receive from him the eye that ſeeth them. Oh! that men might feel after, and come into, that wherein they might be pitied, and ſpared by their Maker. Man muſt bow; that which is of God in man (which hath long lain under oppreſſion) muſt be exalted. It is the day of his power, and he will reign in it. Oh! happy they that bow to his ſcepter, and kiſs the ſhinings of his light (even the ſharpeſt rebukes of it in their hearts) that they may turn from, and travel out of, the darkneſs (where is death, deſtruction, and miſery, even in all the counſels and ways of it), and come into unity with that which is pure, and live.

Written in Aylesbury priſon,
27th of 6th month, 1666.

A faithful Guidance to the Principle and Path of Truth, wherein eternal Life is witneſſed, by thoſe who are born thereof, and walk therein.

THERE muſt be ſomewhat let down from God into a man's heart, to change his heart, and redeem it to God, or he cannot be ſaved. He muſt receive a ſeed, be born of a new and incorruptible ſeed, or he cannot be renewed from his corrupt nature and ſtate. He muſt be born of water and God's Spirit, or he cannot enter into God's kingdom.

Now this is the true religion; namely, to experience and be ſubject to that power which redeems to God; which breaks the power of the wicked-one in the heart, firſt caſting him out, and then taking poſſeſſion of the veſſel, and filling it with the holy treaſure.

Queſt. *But how may a man meet with ſuch a thing as this?*

Anſw. The ſcripture (which gives a faithful teſtimony concerning the truth) ſaith, Chriſt, the Word of faith which the apoſtles preached, is nigh. Inſomuch as a man need not ſay, who ſhall go up or down to fetch it? But what ſaith it? *The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart.* This is that which reconciles to God, cutting down and ſlaying the enmity by the power of the croſs, and bringing up the ſeed. This is the adverſary in the way of the ſinner, which he that maketh peace with ſhall be remitted all his treſpaſſes paſt, and find power and ſtrength againſt ſin for the time to come, as he is gathered into, and brought forth in his pure life and nature.

Queſt. *But how ſhall I know and receive this?*

Anſw. That in the heart which is contrary to ſin, which diſcovereth ſin, which witneſſeth againſt ſin, and is drawing the mind from it, furniſhing thoſe with a new and holy ability, who wait upon the Lord in it; that, that is the thing, though in ever ſo little a ſeed or low meaſure. Now he that minds this, hearkens to this, turns from what this (in its pure unerring light) ſhews to be evil, follows (in the will, ſtrength, and ability which is of this) what this ſhews to be good, he receives it; and waiting upon it, and becoming daily ſubject to it, ſhall grow up in it, increaſe in the knowledge of it, and acquaintance with it, and receive of it daily more and more. And thus the man whoſe way was vile, whoſe heart was naught, formed in wickedneſs, filled with corruption, daily bringing forth ſin and fruits unto death, ſhall find theſe (by the pure light, and holy inſtructions of life) daily purged out of him, and Chriſt formed in him, and the holy fruits of righteouſneſs brought forth through his veſſel, by the power and Spirit of Chriſt, to the glory of God the Father.

And then being in Chriſt, being in the principle of his life, and acting therein, here is peace in the ſoul, reſt to it from its enemies and God's judgments, and acceptance with the Father in what the ſoul thus is and works.

But then the world will perſecute and hate exceedingly; becauſe this ſoul, who thus ſubmits to God, and is thus changed by him, is not of the world, but of the Father, which begat it in Chriſt, and formeth it in his image and likeneſs.

Likewiſe in this light the eyes are opened to read the ſcriptures, and to underſtand therein the conditions of the people and ſaints of the Moſt High in former generations, and how the wicked ſpirit wrought then, to oppoſe the truth and people of God, and to draw men into deceit. Yea, and many other ways the ſcriptures are exceeding ſweet and uſeful, being read in that which gives the true ſenſe and underſtanding of them.

But let him that once putteth his hand to the plough (beginning to feel ſomewhat of God, and to ſubject unto it, and ſo to taſte of the peace and pureneſs of it) never look back to the world, nor mind the temptations and oppoſitions he will meet with from that nature and ſpirit, either in himſelf or others; for if he do, he will never be able to travel on, but rather conſult with fleſh and blood, and ſo return back into Egypt, and loſe the crown which is laid up for thoſe who paſs on through the wilderneſs, through the trials, through the temptations, through the wants, through the various exerciſes to their journey's end.

This is the path of life in brief; happy is he who feels the guider into it, and faithfully follows him therein to the end.

There is another queſtion ſprings up in my heart, which is this:

Queſt. *How may a man come to have his ſins waſhed away by the blood of Chriſt?*

Anſw. By coming into the light, and walking in the light, which diſcovers the blood, and wherein alone it is ſprinkled by God, and felt by the ſoul, he may receive the cleanſing which is by it. This is according to the teſtimony of ſcripture, as 1 *John* i. 7. *If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowſhip one with another; and the blood of Jeſus Chriſt, his Son, cleanſeth us from all ſin.* By the light the darkneſs is diſpelled, and in the light the corruption and filth is waſhed away by the blood, and the ſoul (mind and conſcience) cleanſed from it.

This then is the meſſage that we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkneſs at all, ver. 5. What then? Why then they that will know God, and walk with God, muſt by the virtue of his truth be turned from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto God (as *Acts* xxvi. 18.); and in that light he ſhall meet with the Father, and with his Son Jeſus Chriſt, and have fellowſhip with them, *ver.* 3. and ſhall be waſhed (both with the water and with the blood) and kept clean and pure thereby in the ſight of God.

Queſt.

Queſt. *But how ſhall I come into the light, and how may I walk therein?*

Anſw. Chriſt is the light. (He is the light of the world, the light of men, the light of life.) And thou needſt not ſay in thine heart, Who ſhall go up to heaven, or down into the deep, for him? For he is near, in thy mouth, and in thy heart. This is the word of faith, which thou art to believe in, love, and obey; that in the love, faith, and obedience thereof, thine heart may be circumciſed, and thou mayeſt live. This is the goſpel of our ſalvation, even this Chriſt, this word, this light, this life, which redeems from ſin, which deſtroyeth the deſtroyer, and ſetteth the ſoul free to ſerve and live to the Lord. This was the meſſage the apoſtles had to deliver in their day, as *Rom.* x. 8. And this was Moſes's meſſage too, when he ſpake concerning the new covenant. For Moſes did not only deliver the old covenant, but he alſo ſpake concerning the new, even another covenant than that of Mount Horeb, *Deut.* xxix. 1. And the word of this other covenant was not the law written in tables of ſtone; but the word nigh in the mouth and heart, *chap.* xxx. 14.

Object. *But that place ſpeaks of doing (which is the voice of the old covenant, do this and live); but the new covenant ſtands in believing.*

Anſw. The end of faith is obedience. Why do I believe Chriſt, but that I may receive the law of his Spirit, and walk before him in the newneſs of the obedience thereof? And he that obeys is of the faith, and in the truth; and he that obeys not, is out of it; is not in the power, not in the life, which brings forth the obedience; ſo out of the thing which redeems, and in which the redemption is witneſſed: but he that obeys, he that doth the will, he is in the righteouſneſs, in the power, in the life, from which the obedience ſprings.

And here the waſhing and purifying of the ſoul is truly known and witneſſed. Outward ſacrifices under the law were vain, as to cleanſing the ſoul; and an outward belief of what Chriſt did and ſuffered, effects not the thing now. What then? The new creature doth; the pure faith doth; the pure obedience doth. It did it formerly, it doth it ſtill, and nothing elſe can do it. *Bring no more vain oblations; but waſh ye, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; ceaſe to do evil, learn to do well*, &c. But how ſhould this be? Could they ever attain this by the old covenant? Nay; but Moſes had not only delivered them the old covenant, but alſo had directed them to the new, to the Word of faith, to the Word of life and power in the heart and mouth, through the obedience whereof they might waſh themſelves (as Peter, even in the goſpel times, ſpeaketh, 1 *Pet.* xxii.), put away the evil of their doings; ceaſe to do evil, learn to do well, *&c.* And what then? Why then they ſhould receive the cleanſing through the blood of the Lamb; for then, though their ſins were as ſcarlet, they ſhould be as white as ſnow; though they were red like crimſon, they ſhould be as wool, *Iſai.* i. 16, 17, 18.

So Micah tells them (when they aſked how they might come before God to pleaſe him?) *He hath ſhewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do juſtly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God*, Mic. vi. 8. Where or how doth God ſhew this to man? Had not Moſes told that before; to wit, by the Word nigh in the mouth and heart? There is ſomewhat near man, even in his mouth, which divides his words one from another, ſhewing him (at ſome times, and would do it oftener if he heeded it) which are bad words, and which are good words. What is that that doth this? The ſame thing alſo is in his heart, as a diſcerner of the thoughts and intents thereof, ſhewing him when there is a good thought, deſire, or intention in his mind, and when there is a bad or wicked one. What is this? Oh! that men knew what it is! Oh! that they could fear the Lord, and become ſubject to it, and they ſhould know what it is!

Every man that will be ſanctified, and inherit God's kingdom, muſt be born of the will of God. He muſt deny his own will (as Chriſt did; not my will, ſaid he, Father, but thine be done) that muſt be crucified. He muſt ſuffer in the fleſh, die to the fleſh, and live in and to the holy nature and Spirit of God.

Now thus a man comes to be born of the pure will; to wit, by hearing the word nigh in the mouth and heart, and becoming ſubject to it. This cuts down his own will day by day, and brings up the will and nature of God in him, through which he is changed and ſanctified, and becomes a new creature. For the old creature is made up of the old underſtanding and will; but the new creature is made up of the new.

Wherewithal ſhall a young man cleanſe his way? By taking heed according to thy word, ſaith David. What word was that? Was it the word of the old covenant, or the word nigh in the mouth and heart? And *thy word*, ſaith he, *is a lanthorn to my feet, and a light to my path.* What word was that, the word of the firſt covenant, or the word of the ſecond? *The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the ſoul.* What law is that? *The teſtimony of the Lord is ſure, making wiſe the ſimple.* What teſtimony is that? *The ſtatutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart.* What ſtatutes are they? (Were not the ſtatutes of the old covenant heavy and burdenſome?) *The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.* What commandment is that? Yea, what is that which is *ſweeter than the honey, and the honey-comb*, which overcomes with ſweetneſs? Oh! that men could read! Oh! that men could ſee the thing which is pure, and maketh pure; which is righteous, and maketh righteous. After men have ſeen the thing, there is a great way to travel to it; but how far are they off, who do not ſo much as ſee it, but are in the darkneſs and prejudices of that nature and ſpirit which is contrary to it.

Now if the Lord, in his tender mercy and love to thy ſoul, bring thee to a ſenſe of this thing, and thou beginneſt to feel this precious ſearching

ing word discovering any evil to thee, either in thy heart or ways, oh! do not dispute, do not reason against it; but bless the discoverer, bow to the Son, become obedient immediately, faithfully following the Lamb therein, lest he remove his light from thee, and suffer darkness and the disputing wisdom to overtake thee.

Christ is not of the world, and he leads out of the world; out of its vanities, ways, customs, fashions, *&c.* A man cannot serve Christ and the world. Can any man be born of the Father, be begotten by him out of the spirit of the world, and yet live in that, walk in that, which is not of the Father, but of the world; which came from the worldly part, is of the worldly part, nourisheth and pleaseth the worldly part in man, but pleaseth not the Father? Can that man who is not of the world, but of the Father, do any thing that upholdeth the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, or the pride of life, either in himself or others? Doth not the Spirit of the Lord, where it is hearkened to, draw out of these, and out of all things which are of these? Therefore consider well what it will cost, and how hard it is to follow Christ; that thou who desirest to be the Lord's, mayest receive help and strength from him to be faithful, that in his strength thou mayest overcome all that stands between thee and life, that so thou mayest receive the crown, and inherit the kingdom which is prepared for, and given to, the faithful, who labour and fight not in vain; but gain ground and conquer (yea, at length become more than conquerors) through the mercy, love, might, and power of the Lord.

Some sensible experimental QUESTIONS and ANSWERS from the Tenth Chapter of JOHN.

Quest. 1. *WHO is the good shepherd of the sheep?*

Answ. The wisdom, life, and power of the Father (which dwelleth in, and is manifest through, the Son) is the shepherd. He that is the truth, the way, and the life, he also is the shepherd and bishop of the soul.

Quest. 2. *Who are the sheep?*

Answ. They that are born of this wisdom, gathered by this life, turned to this power, they are the sheep. They who are changed by him into his nature, they are of him; sheep of him, the Shepherd; lambs of him, the Lamb; doves of him, the Dove.

Quest. 3. *What is the fold of the sheep?*

Answ. The wisdom, life, and power of the Father, even the same that is the shepherd. The Father's hand wherewith he covers them, wherein he incloseth them, that is the fold. For it is the power, wisdom, and life of the

the Father, which gathereth the ſheep; and he gathereth them into his wiſdom, into his life; and that is a wall or fold about them.

Object. *Is not the church the fold?*

Anſw. This in the church, or the church in this, is the fold; but not out of this. For there is no ſafety or preſervation among any ſort or gathering of people, but as they ſtand and abide in this. And ſtanding and abiding in this, they have authority and power from the chief biſhop of the ſoul; but none out of this.

Queſt. 4. *Who is the door?*

Anſw. The Shepherd is the door alſo, who lets into the fold, and ſhuts out, at his pleaſure; and none can rightly enter but by him.

Queſt. 5. *What are they that run before the power, or farther than the power leads and guides them?*

Anſw. They are thieves and robbers, and they may deſtroy the life and freſhneſs in thoſe that are not watchful; but they cannot help to ſave or build up, becauſe they themſelves are out of that, come out of that, and act out of that, which alone can do it.

Queſt. 6. *How may the ſheep be diſcerned from the goats, and from ſuch alſo as put on the ſheep's cloathing, but yet are not ſheep in nature and ſpirit?*

Anſw. By their lamb-like nature, by the meekneſs and innocency in them which is of the Lamb, which none can have but they that are of him; for it is not to be found in man's nature, nor to be attained by his art. They alſo know and hear the voice of the Word nigh in the mouth and heart, and follow the law of his Spirit, received from his mouth, which none elſe but his ſheep do, or can do; for this is given by him, and it is given by him only to his ſheep.

Queſt. 7. *What doth Chriſt the Shepherd (the eternal Word, the wiſdom, life, and power of the Father) do for his ſheep?*

Anſw. He doth great things for them, which who can utter? But happy is he that feels and knows them. He gives them a new nature, a new ſpirit, a new heart, a new name, which none knoweth but he that hath it; for it is written on the white ſtone, which none elſe receives, nor none elſe can read, but he that hath the eye which is of him, what is written thereon. He giveth them eternal life; he leadeth them into the paſtures of life; he giveth them to drink of the waters of life. He putteth them forth out of the priſon-houſe, out of the chains and fetters, out of the darkneſs, out of the bonds, and from under the burdens of the ſoul, into the pure light and liberty of the Spirit, where they taſte, know, and enjoy of his freedom, and dwell with him, and reſt with him, and lie down with him, and riſe up with him, even in the ſame eternal life, Spirit, and power, wherein his dwelling-place is. And all this they enjoy ſafely, hearkening to the voice of the Shepherd, and turning from the voice of the ſtranger, which it is natural to them to do. For being turned from man, born of that which is immortal, and keeping to that; that ear which is there received will alone

alone hearken to the voice of him who is immortal; and the voice of the ſtranger (who ſpeaketh of himſelf) is preſently diſcerned and turned from, by him that heareth with the true ear. *The Lord God, who is the ſpring and fountain of all good, inflame people with deſires after the pure life, and holy nature, which is of and from Chriſt the ſeed, his Son, and ſatisfy thoſe deſires which are ſingly and uprightly after him.*

The CONCLUSION.

GLORIOUS was the eſtate of the church before the apoſtaſy, for purity of doctrine, for holy order and diſcipline, for love to God, one to another, and to all men (even of enemies) for faith in God, for the preſence and power of his Spirit among them (inſomuch as the unbeliever coming among them, might find his heart and ſtate reached to, and be forced to confeſs and report that God was in them of a truth) for ſingleneſs and uprightneſs of heart, meekneſs and innocency of ſpirit and converſation, for zeal for God and his truth, ſuffering the ſpoiling of their goods, impriſonments, ſtripes, and many other ways, both from the heathen, and alſo from the profeſſing Jews, who had been the church once. Oh! what ſhall I ſay concerning the beauty and lovelineſs of that ſtate? Ye that would know it, oh! wait to feel it in that which gives the true ſenſe of it.

But over this glorious ſtate came a dark, thick, corrupt night, wherein the kernel was loſt, and the ſhell defaced; wherein the houſe, which had been ſwept and garniſhed, became again recovered and poſſeſſed by the wicked ſpirit. And how great hath this darkneſs been! Oh! what a kind of church hath appeared in the world, wherein the ſpirit of enmity hath dwelt and acted in men, under the name of Chriſtianity! So that inſtead of loving and ſeeking the good of enemies, they are ready to rend and tear one another for every little difference, and will be lords over mens faith, requiring men to practiſe things in religion before the Spirit of the Lord teacheth them ſo to do, which the apoſtles did not. For though they had from God the expreſs knowledge of what was truth, and could certainly inſtruct and build men up therein, yet they were not lords over mens faith; but if men were otherwiſe-minded than according to what they knew and taught, they could wait and bear with them, bidding them walk ſo far as they had attained, and God in his due time would reveal the reſt alſo. Oh! that men were come to this ſpirit again! then they would be Chriſtians indeed, and then they might be known to be Chriſt's diſciples, by their loving the brethren and fellow-diſciples. But without this love, mens religion is but a tinkling cymbal, making a noiſe and ſound of ſomewhat, but not having the true nature or virtue of religion in it.

Now

Now will it not be a glorious day, when the Spirit of the Lord cleanſeth away this thick darkneſs, and cauſeth the light of his pure truth to ariſe and appear again? Why there is ſuch a day to be, wherein the true church (which was reproached and driven into the wilderneſs) is to come out of the wilderneſs again, and her witneſſes ſtand on their feet again, and her ſeed to ſpring up in the power of life, following the Lamb, who marcheth on fighting with the ſword of the Spirit (the word of his mouth) conquering and to conquer thereby the corrupted antichriſtian world, even as he did at firſt the corrupt heatheniſh world. The Lord will purify his temple, and cleanſe the world by the plagues of his angels which he hath prepared, making way for the beauty of his truth, and the church of his gathering; wherein he will bring forth his righteouſneſs, wherein his power ſhall appear, wherein his preſence ſhall be made manifeſt, wherein that which ſhined before in the primitive church, ſhall ſhine again in this new-reared building of his, inſomuch as men ſhall be forced to ſay, *This is the church of Chriſt indeed, God is here of a truth; this is the Goſpel-Jeruſalem indeed, which is built upon the holy hill of Sion; in which innocency, righteouſneſs, truth, love, ſweetneſs, peaceableneſs, and the gentle nature and Spirit of the Lamb lives and reigns; and the Lord bleſs thee, O habitation of Juſtice, and mountain of holineſs.*

Now of a truth this work is begun. The times of refreſhment are come from the preſence of the Lord. The Lord hath heard from heaven, pitying the cries of his ſeed, and hath viſited their ſouls, cauſing the light of life (even the pure light of the everlaſting covenant) to ſhine upon their tabernacles. But whoever would know theſe things, and partake of them, muſt come in at the door, by the guidance of the Spirit, through the light which is with him. And he that would enjoy the full light (even the ſhinings forth of the ſun at noon-day) muſt begin with its glimmerings, even that in the heart, which diſcovereth and draweth out of the corrupt ſtate of the world towards the Father. Oh! hear and live. Do not diſpute about it, but wait to feel it; upon the feeling of it, deſpiſing the ſhame, and taking up and enduring the croſs, and ſo bearing the reproach and ſufferings of Chriſt in thy age and generation. And as thou obeyeſt, thou ſhalt know of its doctrine; but out of the pure faith and obedience, there is no true, ſound, deep, rooted knowledge; but all of that kind muſt be parted with, for the knowledge which is of the faith, and which is made manifeſt and increaſed in the obedience; which knowledge is of a far more excellent kind and nature, than that which thou art to part with for it. The Lord guide thy mind, and ſtretch forth his hand to help thee, who from the leaſt touch of a true nature and ſpirit, deſireſt after the pure truth and way of eternal life. Amen.

This teſtimony (here held forth) is faithful and true, and (I know) the witneſs of God in many hearts will anſwer to it; and happy is he that maketh a right uſe of it. For, ſo doing, his ſoul will not fall ſhort of the pure liveing truth, nor ſet up any thing elſe for truth which is not.

To ſuch as are not ſatisfied with a Profeſſion, without the true Life and Power, but have ſincere Deſires in their Hearts after the LORD himſelf, and a Willingneſs to be acquainted with his pure living Truth, and with the Soul's true Guide and Leader; this Experience is in my Heart to expreſs unto you, which we have all along witneſſed in our Travels out of the dark corrupt Land, into the Land of Life and Purity.

WE have ſtill found the willer, the runner, the ſelf-ſtriver, the wiſe comprehending part, *&c.* left behind; and the grace of God alone able to lead towards him, and the birth which is of and by grace ſtill to obtain the mercy. And Chriſt is our life, and in the union with his Spirit lies all our ability and ſtrength; and that knowledge of Chriſt, which we witneſs to be life eternal, we did not meet with whilſt we thought to have it in the ſcriptures, but it hath been all along revealed to us by God's Spirit; ſo that we can truly ſay fleſh and blood did not reveal the Son to us, but the Father. Yet that which the ſcriptures teſtify concerning Chriſt is exactly true according as it is there related, and is ſo acknowledged and really owned by us; though we obtained not our knowledge of Chriſt by the letter, but by receiving a principle of life from God; and coming into union with his Spirit, we came to the true knowledge and owning of the letter; which as it came from the life, ſo can it only be rightly read and underſtood in the life from which it came: ſo that he that is out of that, cannot but err concerning the letter, and misjudge concerning the things of God; whereas he that is guided by, and lives in, God's Spirit (receiving his knowledge there) cannot err concerning the Spirit, or concerning the letter; but hath that within him, which gives to him, and preſerves him in, the true ſenſe and underſtanding of both.

Now, friends, this is an excellent thing indeed, to come to, and be acquainted with, and receive that, which the ſcriptures teſtify of; to wit, to receive Chriſt, to feel union with him in his Spirit, to enter into the new and holy agreement with God, into the everlaſting covenant of life and peace, to feel the partition-wall broken down, and the wall of ſalvation reared up, and the defence which is thereby; to find the law of God, the law of life, the law of the new creation, written in the heart; the pure fear planted there by God, which keepeth the mind and ſpirit from departing from him; to

have his Spirit put within, cauſing to walk in his ways, and to keep his ſtatutes, and judgments, and do them; and ſo to have union and fellowſhip with the Lord in that which is pure and living of him, in Chriſt the new and living way, which was before the fall, and leads the obedient out of the fall, even beyond Adam's ſtate, into himſelf who never fell, in whom is no ſin, nor erring, no not for the wayfaring man, though a fool, who often erred and wandered before he came thither; but there the Father's hand, even the hand of the eternal power, is felt, which none can pluck out of. Oh! that ye knew the infallible leader, and were turned from darkneſs to the light (and did believe therein) and from the power of Satan unto God, that ye through his Spirit might undeniably witneſs the myſteries of his kingdom, and partake of and enjoy that which his love, grace, and mercy, plentifully diſtributes among his children that wait upon him in one way, under the holy ordering of his Spirit; which was long harped at and longed after by many of us; but we could never meet with it, till the Lord in his mercy cauſed the light of his day to ſhine into our hearts, which chaſed away the darkneſs of the night, and made the things of the day manifeſt.

Are ye of the houſe of Jacob? Are ye of the right ſeed? Are ye of the true breathers after God's holineſs, after the life and righteouſneſs of his Sion? Oh! then come ye, know, acknowledge, receive, and wait to walk in the light of the Lord; and do not join to that in you which is ſeparated from, and knoweth not, the light of the Lord, but oppoſeth it. And, friends, I beſeech you, take heed in this point; for he that denieth, refuſeth, oppoſeth, ſpeaketh evil, or thinketh hardly of any thing that is indeed of Chriſt, doth it to Chriſt himſelf, in Chriſt's account (that is, Chriſt looketh upon it as if he had denied him, refuſed him, oppoſed him, ſpoke evil of him, *&c.*) and it will be ſo laid to his charge in the day of the Lord. And indeed ſuch is my love to you, and ſuch my deſire after your eternal good and welfare, that I would not have you ſtumble at the light and power of life, which the Lord hath revealed and ſtretched out (in this day of his mercy) to gather and ſave with; but feel the gathering by it from all that ſcattereth from the Lord, with the preſervation which is thereby, and the effecting of that in your ſpirits which it is able to effect, as it comes to manifeſt itſelf unto you, and to put forth his ſtrength in you. So wait for the gathering unto the light (the light of the everlaſting day of God) and into the power which is able to redeem and defend the ſoul from all that is contrary to God. And when ye are there, be diligent and faithful to the Lord: and feel (oh! daily wait to feel from him) the uncloathing of your ſpirits from all their own unrighteouſneſs; yea, from all their own righteouſneſs alſo (which is but as filthy rags before the Lord, even of the ſame nature with the unrighteouſneſs), that ye may be cloathed upon with the new and living garment, wherein there is neither ſpot nor wrinkle, nor any ſuch thing. For they that are of Chriſt, and in Chriſt, do as really put

on

on the nature, the Spirit, the garment of the ſecond Adam, as ever they did put off the old garment, nature, and ſpirit.

This is from one, who uprightly and ſingly deſireth your union with the Lord in his pure Truth and Holy Anointing, and your diſunion from all that is contrary to him.

ISAAC PENINGTON.

A QUERY added, with its ANSWER.

WHAT is the true confeſſion of Chriſt, even that confeſſion which ariſeth from the knowledge which is life eternal?

Anſw. Friends, I witneſs it to be this; A confeſſion of his nature, a confeſſion of his Spirit, a confeſſion of his life, a confeſſion of his power. To confeſs the preſent living appearance of Chriſt, that is to confeſs Chriſt. *Behold*, ſaith he, *I ſtand at the door and knock.* He that heareth his voice, acknowledgeth him, letteth him in, ſubjecteth to his truth and Holy Spirit; he confeſſeth him. But, though a man ſhould acknowledge and confeſs all that is recorded in the ſcriptures concerning him; yet if he know not his knocks, ſo as to let him in, and become ſubject to his power, he doth not confeſs Chriſt as he ought to do, and as God requireth of him. Oh! that ye could learn thus to know Chriſt, and thus to confeſs him! For until ye thus know him, ye cannot thus confeſs him! and your knees muſt firſt bow at his name, before your tongues can rightly confeſs him, to the glory of God the Father! For if ye will indeed glorify the Father, ye muſt bow to the Son, who is the light wherein God dwells, in the ſhinings whereof he appears to, and viſits the ſons of men. And as the Son himſelf is ſpiritual; ſo is the light wherewith he viſits dark man. His law is ſpiritual, able to convert the ſoul of any man in whoſe heart it is written, and to make wiſe (the moſt ſimple among men) unto ſalvation. For the law of God, writ in the heart, is from the covenant of life; and delivers and preſerves from the law of ſin and death, having the light, power, and Spirit of Chriſt in and with it, from whom it comes.

Now if ye will know theſe things clearly, certainly, and infallibly; wait to feel ſome touches, ſome drawings, ſome convictions of God's Spirit upon your hearts. And then diſpute not againſt them; but immediately become ſubject, ſo far as the light and drawings of the Father incline and lead the mind; and then ye ſhall ſee what he is that draws, and of what nature his drawings are. And if once ye come to feel the preciouſneſs of his ointment; and to partake of it, receiving it and following it, it will

bring you into the pure virginity, which loves and longs after the name that anoints with the pure living oil.

Friends, I was once where ye now are; and in that day, I alſo (through error and miſtake) called the light wherewith Chriſt hath enlightened man, *natural*, as ye now do. But the Lord hath ſince ſhewed me, that it was not the true birth of life in me which ſo called it; and it is alſo manifeſted to me in his Spirit of truth (which deceives not), that it is not the true birth in you, which ſo judges of it. Oh! that ye were born of the Spirit, and in it knew the names of the things from their nature, and might be taught of the Father to worſhip in the Son! which ye can never do, till ye come into the Son's light; and that is the Son's light, even that wherewith he hath enlightened men, that they might believe in the Father through him! The ſcriptures (or any words ſpoken or written) are not the light itſelf, but teſtimonies concerning the light. Now that which ye are to come into, and to dwell and abide in, is the light itſelf; which light was before any words that teſtify of it, and is the ſubſtance of all the ſhadows, and the end of all the teſtimonies concerning it. He is *Alpha* and *Omega*, the Beginning and the End of the new creation of God. Oh! that ye ſo knew him!

That from which the ſcriptures came, is the thing, the life, the Spirit, the power itſelf; which is able to write inwardly, as well as outwardly. And he that knows the thing, and is led to the thing by the inward writing (which is the teſtimony of Jeſus, the Spirit of prophecy), he by the teſtimony of Jeſus, by the Spirit of prophecy, is led to the Holy Power; which he believing in, it prevails to ſave him out of the contrary ſpirit and power. And this the Gentiles without the law, the Jews under the law, and the believers under Grace, had ſpiritually all one and the ſame way and path of life unto ſalvation; and God will be clear and juſt in judging them all according thereunto, who had all ſome manifeſtation of the goſpel and power which ſaves, according to the diſpenſation of the good pleaſure of the free giver. And mens periſhing in the time of every diſpenſation, is not for want of light and power from God, but from mens withdrawing and apoſtatizing from the light and power, which in every diſpenſation of life ſtretched forth its hand and arm ſufficiently to gather and ſave.

There is ONE THING *more in my* HEART *unto You, at this Time, which is*

Concerning applying the PROMISES.

THE Promiſes of God are great and precious, and give to partake of the divine nature thoſe that wait upon the Lord in the faith and obedience of his truth. Now there are eſtates and conditions to which they do belong; and there are eſtates and conditions to which they do not belong:

belong: and if any one apply any promiſe to himſelf, he not being in that eſtate and condition to which that promiſe belongs, he deceives his ſoul, and ſucks not in the true ſweetneſs and comfort of the promiſe, but of his own imaginary apprehenſions concerning the promiſe.

There is a ſtate of wounding, of judging, of God's pleading with the ſoul, becauſe of ſin and tranſgreſſion. Now he that breaks and wounds, he alone can bind up and heal; and the Lord is to be waited upon in the way of his judgments, until he ſee meet to bind up and heal. Now the Lord heals by the ſame Spirit and power wherewith he wounds; but it is hard to lie under the judgment, to bear the indignation of the Lord, and ſo keep the wound (which he makes) open, till he pour in the oil, and heal. For there is that near, which will be offering to heal before the ſeaſon, and will be bringing in promiſes and applying promiſes, otherwiſe than the Spirit of the Lord intendeth or applieth them. Now this is diligently to be watched againſt, that the hurt of the ſoul (judged and wounded by the Spirit of the Lord) be not healed ſlightly, and peace ſpoken to it (and an expectation and hope raiſed in it) which is not of the Lord. But this is the right way, even to give up to feel that which wounds, and to receive the woundings of thy ſoul's friend, and lie low before him in the wounded ſtate, waiting upon him in the way of his judgments and righteous indignation; till the ſame that wounded, ſpeak peace. For the ſame is to ſpeak peace, and not another; *I the Lord wound, and I heal; I kill, and I make alive. Judgment is mine, and mercy is mine; and they both iſſue from my lips,* (See *Iſa.* xii. 1.) So every one, that would not be deceived about, nor miſapply the promiſes, wait to feel that in you, which leads into the condition to which the promiſe belongs, and to be led into and kept in the condition by it. And then, the ſame that leads into the condition, will apply the promiſe to him who is in the condition, the ear being open to him, hearkening to the Lord, waiting what he will ſpeak, who ſpeaks peace to his people in his ſeaſons; and having the ear ſhut againſt the voice of the unrighteous troubler of the ſouls of God's heritage. Yea, he that applieth the promiſes to the ſoul (having brought it into the ſtate to which they belong) he alſo will lead and bring unto the fulfilling of the promiſes, even to the receiving of the good things promiſed and waited for; ſo that the ſoul ſhall witneſs the goſpel to be a glorious ſtate indeed; a ſtate of life, a ſtate of liberty, a ſtate of power, a ſtate of dominion, a ſtate of holineſs, a kingdom of righteouſneſs and peace, wherein there are everlaſting manſions and dwelling-places in Chriſt Jeſus, for the ſeed of the righteous for evermore. The Lord God of everlaſting mercy, life, power, and rich goodneſs, cauſe the light of his own Holy Spirit to ſhine into your hearts, guide you thereby into and in the true way, even in the pure living path (which was and is but one for ever), that ye may come into the true poſſeſſion, and full enjoyment, and infallible witneſſing of theſe things.

23d of the Second Month, 1668.

There

There is another QUERY, of great Concernment, which ſpringeth up in my Heart towards you.

Query. IS not the Spirit, or anointing, the great goſpel-promiſe, and the great goſpel-ordinance? Is not he *truth, and no lie*, and the leader out of all lies and deceits into the truth, and the preſerver of the mind and ſpirit therein? *Little children*, ſaid the ſame apoſtle, who had directed to the anointing, *keep yourſelves from idols.* Is there any poſſibility of being kept from images and idols, but by him? Can any underſtand the things of the Spirit, or the words ſpoken by the Spirit concerning ſpiritual things, but by him? And then, is not every apprehenſion, that ye take up from the ſcriptures concerning ſpiritual things, which ye have not from him (but comprehend and gather of yourſelves), an image, or conceiving of your own, concerning that thing, and not that true knowledge and underſtanding of the thing which he alone can give? Oh! that all the chambers of imagery were thrown down in you, and every idol of the heart and mind diſcovered to you, and broken down by the light and power of the Lord; that ye might come to that which is pure and living, and by its purifying know the pure heart, the pure mind, the pure conſcience, and offer up the pure perfect offering; not the lame, blind, imperfect, *&c.* which were not accepted (in the figure) under the law, nor acceptable under the goſpel, *Mal.* i. 11. 13. and *chap.* iii. 3.

Friends, ye muſt know that which is pure from God, and ye muſt come into it (out of that which is impure, into that which is pure). Now that ye may do ſo, ye muſt know the purifying; for nothing that is impure, can enter into that which is pure. Yea, ye muſt become prieſts to God, and wear the prieſt's garment, the pure garment, the living garment, the fine linnen, without mixture of the woollen. Ye muſt be born of the innocency, be cloathed with the innocency. The ſtony, hard, deſperately-wicked heart muſt be taken away, and the tender heart of fleſh received, the mind renewed to God, the fear put within (which cleanſeth and keepeth clean), the law writ within, the Spirit of the Lord put in the inward parts, and felt powerfully operating and changing there. Yea, and the inſide muſt not only be clean, but the outſide alſo; for ye muſt be cloathed with the Spirit, cloathed with the Lamb's righteouſneſs and holineſs; and thus ye muſt appear before the Lord in his temple, which is the beauty of holineſs, whoſe houſe holineſs becomes for ever; where ye are never to appear in your own filthy rags, but in the nature, Spirit, righteouſneſs, and life of Chriſt. And thus ye are well-pleaſing to God, even in that which is of God; being born of that, formed of that, found in that, appearing in that. But in his own, no man can be accepted; for it is determined of God,

God, and ſtands irreverſible for ever, that in his own (in his own knowledge, in his own faith, in his own obedience, in his own righteouſneſs, in his own willing and running, *&c.*) ſhall no fleſh for ever be juſtified in his ſight; but only and alone in the nature, Spirit, life, righteouſneſs, faith, obedience, and holineſs of his Son. Therefore wait for the ſeed, that ye may know the ſeed, feel the ſeed, the pure ſeed of life (the leaven of the heavenly kingdom) and may witneſs it ariſing and come in you to do the will, and you in it quickened and enabled to live to and ſerve the living God. And when ye know this ſeed, ye know Chriſt; and when ye receive this ſeed, ye receive Chriſt; and if it live in you, Chriſt lives in you; and in it (being in it, and abiding in it) are ye heirs of the life, kingdom and power, which hath no end; and ſhall daily feel the promiſes and bleſſings belonging to the ſeed, flowing in upon your ſpirits. But if ye content yourſelves with the knowledge of Chriſt, which the erring and apoſtatiſed ſpirit of man from the life and power, may gather out of the letter of the ſcriptures, and feed thereon; that will not nouriſh you up to eternal life, but death, and ſin, and the gates of hell will have power over you notwithſtanding that; but if ye, through the Spirit, receive power over that which is contrary to God, and through him mortify the deeds of the body, ye ſhall live. Therefore wait for the manifeſtation of the pure power of the endleſs life, which is now diſpenſed from on high (bleſſed be the name of the living one) and wait to know and be joined to that ſeed of life, wherein and whereby it is diſpenſed, that ye may witneſs Chriſt's kingdom come to you, and the reign of your ſpirits with him therein, over all that captivateth from him, loadeth the ſoul, boweth down and oppreſſeth.

A POSTSCRIPT,

Concerning DECEIT and being DECEIVED.

THERE is that which deceives (where it is hearkened to) and there is that which is liable to be deceived by it. There is likewiſe that which deceiveth not; and there is alſo that which cannot be deceived. So likewiſe there is a pure fear and watching in the truth againſt the deceit, leſt by any means it ſhould enter and betray. As alſo there is a fear that is a ſnare (which the true faith preſerves out of), whereby many are entangled in the very bowels of deceit, even concerning thoſe very things about which they are afraid they ſhould be deceived. This hath been experienced by thoſe, who have been acquainted with the Lord's precious truth, and thereby are come to know and diſcern the wiles and devices of Satan; who often hath quenched what the Lord hath kindled, by his ſtirring

ring up a fear, leſt it ſhould not be of the Lord, but from the ſpirit of deceit.

It is true, that in the apoſtaſy from the life and Spirit of truth, deceit did generally prevail and overwhelm the minds of people. And ſo far as people are yet in the apoſtaſy (not being gathered and redeemed out of it, by the Spirit and power of the Lord), they are yet under deceit; though perhaps they little think ſo. Little did we think formerly (and little do they think now, who are now in that ſtate we were then in), that while we ſo much feared being deceived, we were already deceived, being ſhort of the life and power of truth, which alone is able to make free and preſerve from deceit. When the Lord cometh to bring to the primitive light and principle, that he might perfectly deliver out of deceit; what can the enemy do more advantageouſly towards keeping his hold in the mind (and towards keeping the mind in the deceits wherein he hath already entangled it), than to ſtir up and heighten a fear in it, leſt the precious truth, which God maketh manifeſt to deliver the ſoul by, ſhould be deceit? And they that hearken to and let in the voice of the deceiver, muſt needs believe it to be ſo. And thus with them light cometh to be called darkneſs, and darkneſs light. Yea, who is it, at this day, who eſcapeth this ſnare, of calling evil good, and good evil? Surely none but he, whoſe ſoul is led into and lives in the light and power of truth.

For moſt men take up principles (according to their own, or other mens underſtanding of the ſcriptures), and judge according to thoſe principles; and ſo the Spirit and light of the Lord judgeth not in them, but they themſelves judge according to an aſſumed knowledge. So that fleſh is not ſilent, the man is not dead in them and brought to nothing, but only lives in an higher region than he did before. Before, he lived in an apparent unrighteouſneſs; now he lives in an imagined righteouſneſs and faith; but not in the Son's righteouſneſs, not in the Son's faith, not in the Son's power, not in the Son's dominion; but at beſt only in that which he apprehendeth and ſtrongly imagineth to be ſo.

Oh! happy is he, who is come through all his own imaginings and conceivings about the things of God, and his own apprehenſions about ſcriptures and promiſes, and is come into the thing itſelf, into the Spirit of life (into the truth and into the power), and who walks with God therein, daily witneſſing the redemption which is of him through his Son Jeſus Chriſt, who is known and partook of in the pure quickening Spirit, and not otherwiſe. And he that is truly begotten of God, and dwells with him in the light which is eternal, knows that he is of God; which others may ſtrongly imagine they are, but none elſe can truly know it, but may eaſily err and be entangled in the deceits of the enemy (about the new birth, and other weighty things) while they are greatly afraid of being deceived by him, and ſo (through that fear) fly the pure truth, which frees from deceits, leſt it ſhould deceive them.

A BRIEF

A Brief Account of my Soul's Travel towards the Holy Land, and how at length it pleaſed the Lord to join my Heart to his pure, holy, living Truth; wherein I have witneſſed the New Covenant, and Peace with the Lord therein. With a few Words concerning the Way of Knowing and Receiving the Truth: which is not done by Diſputes and Reaſonings of the Mind about it; but in waiting aright for the Demonſtration and Power of God's Spirit to open the Heart and Underſtanding, and by ſubmiſſive Obedience to it, even in its loweſt Appearances in the inward Parts.

MY heart from my childhood was pointed towards the Lord, whom I feared and longed after from my tender years; wherein I felt, that I could not be ſatisfied with (nor indeed ſeek after) the things of this periſhing world, which naturally paſs away; but I deſired true ſenſe of, and unity with, that which abideth for ever. There was ſomewhat indeed then ſtill within me (even the ſeed of eternity) which leavened and balanced my ſpirit almoſt continually; but I knew it not diſtinctly, ſo as to turn to it, and give up to it, entirely and underſtandingly. In this temper of mind I earneſtly ſought after the Lord, applying myſelf to hear ſermons and read the beſt books I could meet with, but eſpecially the ſcriptures, which were very ſweet and ſavoury to me; yea, I very earneſtly deſired and preſſed after the knowledge of the ſcriptures, but was much afraid of receiving mens interpretations of them, or of faſtening any interpretation upon them myſelf; but waited much, and prayed much, that from the Spirit of the Lord I might receive the true underſtanding of them, and that he would chiefly endue me with that knowledge, which I might feel ſanctifying and ſaving. And indeed I did ſenſibly receive of his love, of his mercy, and of his grace, which I felt ſtill freely to move towards me, and at ſeaſons when I was moſt filled with the ſenſe of my own unworthineſs, and had leaſt expectations of the manifeſtation of them. But I was exceedingly entangled about election and reprobation (having drunk in that doctrine, according as

it was then held forth by the ſtricteſt of thoſe that were termed Puritans, and as then ſeemed to be very manifeſt and poſitive from *Rom.* ix. *&c.*), fearing leſt, notwithſtanding all my deſires and ſeekings after the Lord, he might in his decree have paſſed me by; and I felt it would be bitter to me to bear his wrath, and be ſeparated from his love for evermore; yet, if he had ſo decreed, it would be, and I ſhould (notwithſtanding theſe fair beginnings and hopes) fall away and periſh at the laſt. In this great trouble and grief (which was much added to by not finding the Spirit of God ſo in me and with me, as I had read and believed the former Chriſtians had it), and in mourning over and grapling with ſecret corruptions and temptations, I ſpent many years, and fell into great weakneſs of body; and often caſting myſelf upon my bed, did wring my hands and weep bitterly, begging earneſtly of the Lord, daily, that I might be pitied by him, and helped againſt my enemies, and be made conformable to the image of his Son, by his own renewing power. And indeed at laſt (when my nature was almoſt ſpent, and the pit of deſpair was even cloſing its mouth upon me) mercy ſprang, and deliverance came, and the Lord my God owned me, and ſealed his love unto me, and light ſprang within me, which made not only the ſcriptures, but the very outward creatures glorious in my eye, ſo that every thing was ſweet and pleaſant and lightſome round about me. But I ſoon felt, that this eſtate was too high and glorious for me, and I was not able to abide in it, it ſo overcame my natural ſpirits; wherefore, bleſſing the name of the Lord for his great goodneſs to me, I prayed unto him to take that from me which I was not able to bear, and to give me ſuch a proportion of his light and preſence, as was ſuitable to my preſent ſtate, and might fit me for his ſervice. Whereupon this was preſently removed from me; yet a ſavour remained with me, wherein I had ſweetneſs, and comfort, and refreſhment for a long ſeaſon. But my mind did not then know how to turn to and dwell with that which gave me the ſavour, nor rightly to read what God did daily write in my heart, which ſufficiently manifeſted itſelf to be of him, by its living virtue and pure operation upon me; but I looked upon the ſcriptures to be my rule, and ſo would weigh the inward appearances of God to me by what was outwardly written, and durſt not receive any thing from God immediately, as it ſprang from the fountain, but only in that mediate way. Herein did I limit the Holy One of Iſrael, and exceedingly hurt my own ſoul, as I afterwards felt and came to underſtand. Yet the Lord was tender to me, and condeſcended exceedingly, opening ſcriptures to me, freſhly every day, teaching and inſtructing, warming and comforting my heart thereby; and truly he did help me to pray, and to believe, and to love him and his appearances in any; yea, to love all the ſons of men, and all his creatures, with a true love. But that in me which knew not the appearances of the Lord

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in my ſpirit, but would limit him to words of ſcriptures formerly written, that proceeded yet further, and would be raiſing a fabrick of knowledge out of the ſcriptures, and gathering a perfect rule (as I thought) concerning my heart, my words, my ways, my worſhip; and according to what I thus drank in (after this manner, from the ſcriptures) I practiſed, and with much ſeriouſneſs of ſpirit and prayer to God fell a helping to build up an independent congregation, wherein the favour of life and the preſence of God was freſh with me, as I believe there are yet ſome alive of that congregation can teſtify.

This was my ſtate, when I was ſmitten, broken, and diſtreſſed by the Lord, confounded in my worſhip, confounded in my knowledge, ſtripped of all in one day (which it is hard to utter) and was matter of amazement to all that beheld me. I lay open and naked to all that would enquire of me, and ſtrive to ſearch out what might be the cauſe the Lord ſhould deal ſo with me. They would at firſt be jealous that I had ſinned and provoked him ſo to do; but when they had ſcanned things thoroughly, and I had opened my heart nakedly to them, I do not remember any one that ever retained that ſenſe concerning me. My ſoul remembereth the wormwood and gall, the exceeding bitterneſs of that ſtate, and is ſtill humbled in me in the remembrance of it before the Lord. Oh! how did I wiſh with Job, that I might come before him, and bowingly plead with him; for indeed I had no ſenſe of any guilt upon me, but was ſick of love towards him, and as one violently rent from the boſom of his beloved! Oh! how gladly would I have met with death! For I was weary all the day long, and afraid of the night, and weary alſo of the night-ſeaſon, and afraid of the enſuing day. I remember my grievous and bitter mournings to the Lord; how often did I ſay, *O Lord, why haſt thou forſaken me? Why haſt thou broken me to pieces? I had no delight but thee, no deſire after any but thee. My heart was bent wholly to ſerve thee, and thou haſt even fitted me* (as appeared to my ſenſe) *by many deep exerciſes and experiences for thy ſervice; why doſt thou make me thus miſerable?* Sometimes I would caſt mine eye upon a ſcripture, and my heart would even melt within me; at other times I would deſire to pray to my God, as I had formerly done; but I found I knew him not, and I could not tell how to pray, or in any-wiſe to come near him, as I had formerly done. In this condition I wandered up and down from mountain to hill, from one ſort to another, with a cry in my ſpirit, *Can ye tell news of my beloved? Where doth he dwell? Where doth he appear?* But their voices were ſtill ſtrange to me, and I ſhould retire ſad and oppreſſed, and bowed down in ſpirit, from them.

Now ſurely, all ſerious, ſober, ſenſible people, will be ready to enquire, how I came ſatisfyingly to know the Lord at length; or whether I do yet certainly know him, and am yet truly ſatisfied?

Yea indeed, I am ſatisfied at my very heart. Truly my heart is united to him whom I longed after, in an everlaſting covenant of pure life and peace.

Well then, how came this about? will ſome ſay.

Why thus. The Lord opened my ſpirit, the Lord gave me the certain and ſenſible feeling of the pure ſeed, which had been with me from the beginning; the Lord cauſed his holy power to fall upon me, and gave me ſuch an inward demonſtration and feeling of the ſeed of life, that I cried out in my ſpirit, *This is he, this is he; there is not another, there never was another. He was always near me, though I knew him not* (not ſo ſenſibly, not ſo diſtinctly, as now he was revealed in me and to me by the Father); *Oh! that I might now be joined to him, and be alone might live in me.* And ſo in the willingneſs, which God had wrought in me (in this day of his power to my ſoul), I gave up to be inſtructed, exerciſed, and led by him, in the waiting for and feeling of his holy ſeed, that all might be wrought out of me which could not live with the ſeed, but would be hindering the dwelling and reigning of the ſeed in me, while it remained and had power. And ſo I have gone through a ſore travail, and fight of afflictions and temptations, of many kinds; wherein the Lord hath been merciful to me in helping me, and preſerving the ſpark of life in me, in the midſt of many things which had befallen me, whoſe nature tended to quench and extinguiſh it.

Now, thus having met with the true way, and walked with the Lord therein, wherein daily certainty, yea and full aſſurance of faith and of underſtanding is at length obtained; I cannot be ſilent (true love and pure life ſtirring in me and moving me), but am neceſſitated to teſtify of it to others; and this is it, To retire inwardly, and wait to feel ſomewhat of the Lord, ſomewhat of his Holy Spirit and power, diſcovering and drawing from that which is contrary to him, and into his holy nature and heavenly image. And then, as the mind is joined to this, ſomewhat is received, ſome true life, ſome true light, ſome true diſcerning; which the creature not exceeding (but abiding in the meaſure of) is ſafe; but it is eaſy erring from this, but hard abiding with it, and not going before its leadings. But he that feels life, and begins in life, doth he not begin ſafely? And he that waits, and fears, and goes on no further than his captain goes before him, doth he not proceed ſafely? Yea very ſafely, even till he cometh to be ſo ſettled and eſtabliſhed in the virtue, demonſtration and power of truth, as nothing can prevail to ſhake him. Now, bleſſed be the Lord, there are many at this day, who can truly and faithfully witneſs, that they have been brought by the Lord to this ſtate. And thus have we learned of the Lord; to wit, not by the high, ſtriving, aſpiring mind; but by lying low, and being contented with a little. If

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but a crumb of bread (yet if bread) if but a drop of water (yet if water) we have been contented with it, and alſo thankful to the Lord for it; nor by thoughtfulneſs, and wiſe ſearching and deep conſidering with our own wiſdom and reaſon have we obtained it; but in the ſtill, meek, and humble waiting, have we found that brought into the death, which is not to know the myſteries of God's kingdom, and that which is to live, made alive and increaſe in life.

Therefore he that would truly know the Lord, let him take heed of his own reaſon and underſtanding. I tried this way very far; for I conſidered moſt ſeriouſly and uprightly; I prayed, I read the ſcriptures, I earneſtly deſired to underſtand and find out whether that, which this people, called QUAKERS, teſtified of, was the only way and truth of God (as they ſeemed to me but to pretend); but for all this prejudices multiplied upon me, and ſtrong reaſonings againſt them, which appeared to me as unanſwerable. But when the Lord revealed his ſeed in me, and touched my heart therewith, which adminiſtered true life and virtue to me, I preſently felt them there the children of the Moſt High, and ſo grown up in his life, power, and holy dominion (as the inward eye, being opened by the Lord, ſees) as drew forth from me great reverence of heart, and praiſes to the Lord, who had ſo appeared among men in theſe latter days. And as God draweth, in any reſpect, oh! give up in faithfulneſs to him! Deſpiſe the ſhame, take up the croſs; for indeed it is a way which is very croſs to man, and which his wiſdom will exceedingly be aſhamed of; but that muſt be denied and turned from, and the ſecret ſenſible drawings of God's Spirit waited for and given up to. Mind, people: He that will come into the new covenant, muſt come into the obedience of it. The light of life, which God hath hid in the heart, is the covenant; and from this covenant God doth not give knowledge to ſatisfy the vaſt, aſpiring, comprehending wiſdom of man; but living knowledge, to feed that which is quickened by him; which knowledge is given in the obedience, and is very ſweet and precious to the ſtate of him that knows how to feed upon it. Yea truly, this is of a very excellent, pure, precious nature, and a little of it weighs down that great vaſt knowledge in the comprehending part, which the man's ſpirit and nature ſo much prizeth and preſſeth after. And truly, friends, I witneſs at this day a great difference between the ſweetneſs of comprehending the knowledge of things, as expreſſed in the ſcriptures (this I fed much on formerly), and taſting the hidden life, the hidden Manna in the heart (which is my food now, bleſſed for ever be the Lord my God and Saviour). Oh! that others had a true, certain, and ſenſible taſte of the life, virtue, and goodneſs of the Lord, as it is revealed there! Surely, it could not but kindle the true hunger, and inflame the true thirſt; which can never be ſatisfied but by the true bread, and by water from the living fountain.

fountain. This the Lord (in the tenderneſs of his love, and in the riches of his grace and mercy) hath brought us to; and this we earneſtly and uprightly deſire and endeavour, that others may be brought to alſo; that they may rightly (in the true ſilence of the fleſh, and in the pure fullneſs of ſpirit) wait for, and in the Lord's due time receive, that which anſwers the deſire of the awakened mind and ſoul, and ſatisfies it with the true precious ſubſtance for evermore, *Amen.*

SOME

SOME

THINGS

RELATING TO

RELIGION,

Propoſed to the Conſideration of the

ROYAL SOCIETY,

SO TERMED;

TO WIT,

Concerning the Right Ground of Certainty therein.
Concerning Tenderneſs of Spirit, and Perſecution.
A QUERY concerning Separation.
Concerning Waſhing away Sin from the Conſcience; and the Garment of Salvation, and what it is that is covered therewith.

LIKEWISE,

Some QUESTIONS and ANSWERS concerning the Church of the New Covenant, the Rock or Foundation whereon it is Built, and its Preſervation by and upon the Rock.

WITH

Some QUERIES concerning the ſcattered and hidden Eſtate of the Church; and concerning that Church which got up in the View of the Word, inſtead thereof; and was acknowledged by the World, as if ſhe had been the True Church; though in Deed and Truth ſhe was not ſo.

Whereunto are added,

Some QUERIES to PROFESSORS who ſpeak of High Attainments, &c.

Written by One, whom it hath pleaſed the LORD (of his great Goodneſs, and tender Mercy) to lead out of the Darkneſs, into his marvellous Light; known among Men by the Name of

ISAAC PENINGTON.

TO THE

ROYAL SOCIETY,

SO TERMED.

FRIENDS,

I HAVE heard that ye are ſeeking after the excellency of nature and learning. I am not for diſcouraging any man, in endeavouring after that which is good, uſeful, and excellent in its kind and place; but it is the advantage of every thing, to know and abide in its place; and to honour and ſerve him, from whom all good gifts and endowments come. Man hath but a moment in this world, and he is here no more; and then the *ſpirit returneth to God that gave it*, to give an account of the talent which he gave it, and its improvement thereof, to the glory of him that gave it, and to the ſalvation of its own ſoul. Now, this talent is of an higher kind than nature, and will lead higher than nature; giving a man to partake of that wiſdom from which nature came; and teaching him to order all that is natural to its right end. For God is not an enemy to nature, but to the corruption and diſorder of nature. I deſire ye might know and partake of the true wiſdom, and feel union with God in the principle of his own life; and the incorruptible and heavenly ſeed of God receive dominion over the earthly and corruptible. For this end ſingly, in the love ſpringing up in my heart towards you (as it often doth, both towards particular perſons and ſocieties; for I am a friend to all, and a lover of all; ſincerely deſiring the good of all, and the right guidance of their ſouls to happineſs), have I propoſed theſe things following more particularly to your view, though they concern others alſo, that ye thereby might be awakened to ſearch after that which is moſt excellent in you, and be acquainted with the virtue and precious effects thereof, to the full ſatisfaction and compleat joy of your ſouls, in that which alone is able fully to ſatisfy, and give them ground of durable joy and rejoicing, in that which is not of a periſhing nature; but which was, and is, and will be the ſame for ever.

From a friend to the everlaſting peace of your ſouls, and a deſirer of your welfare and proſperity in this world,

ISAAC PENINGTON.

SOME THINGS relating to RELIGION, &c.

Of Certainty, and rightly-grounded Aſſurance, in Matters of RELIGION.

THERE is a witneſs of and from God in every conſcience; which, in his light, power, and authority, witneſſeth for him, and againſt that which is contrary to him, as he pleaſeth to move upon it, viſiting and drawing the hearts of the ſons of men by it.

From this witneſs proceeds the true and well-grounded religion in the mind towards God: For this witneſs both teſtifieth and demonſtrateth that there is a God, and alſo inclineth the mind to deſire and ſeek after the right knowledge and true worſhip of him.

And ſuch who keep to this witneſs, and wait upon God therein, are taught by it the true ſpiritual worſhip; the true and pure fear of the Moſt High; the faith which he giveth to his ſaints; the love which is chaſte and unfeigned; the hope which purifieth the mind, and anchors it on the eternal rock; the meekneſs, patience, gentleneſs, humility, &c. which is not of man's nature, but the gift of God, and the nature of the heavenly giver.

And then for exerciſes of religion, as praying to the Father of ſpirits, hearing the heavenly voice, reading in the Spirit, and with the renewed underſtanding, ſinging and making melody in the heart (and alſo with the voice) to the Lord, as his life is felt, and the ſpiritual bleſſings and treaſure received; all theſe, and whatever elſe is judged neceſſary for the ſoul, are taught by this witneſs of God in the conſcience, as the ſoul groweth up in the light, Spirit, nature, and holy power thereof.

But now, when the Lord reacheth to his witneſs in men, and is teaching their hearts by it, then the enemy, the other ſpirit, whoſe ſeat is in the other part, keepeth a noiſe there, to overbear the voice of the witneſs, and to make men take up religion in another part, which is ſhallow, and reacheth not to the depth and weight of truth, which is in the witneſs

of God, and which the witneſs of God gives to them that come thither.

Thus the enemy ſtirreth up reaſonings, imaginations, and conſultations about God, and his worſhip; wherein he raiſeth up the vain ſhallow mind, forging and bringing forth ſomewhat pleaſing and ſuitable to the earthly underſtanding; taking up the mind therewith, and engaging the heart in ſome ſuch practices therefrom as may quiet and ſatisfy that part in men. For the ways that men take up in their reaſonings and underſtandings, ſatisfy their reaſonings and underſtandings; and ſo they walk in the light of the ſparks, and warm themſelves by the fire of their own kindling; but all this anſwers not the witneſs of God in them, nor will be approved by his light in their own conſciences, when it comes again to be revealed and made manifeſt in them.

This was the ground of the error both of the Jews and Gentiles. The Gentiles were enlightened by God with his true light; what might be known of God (ſuitable to their ſtate and capacity) being manifeſted in them; inſomuch as it is witneſſed concerning them in the ſcriptures (which are a true record and teſtimony) that they knew God. But when they knew him, they glorified him not as God, but became vain in their imaginations, and ſo their fooliſh heart was darkened concerning him: and they worſhipped him not as the witneſs taught them he was to be worſhipped, not according to the manifeſtation of his light in them; but according to their own fooliſh imaginations and reaſonings, which taught them to make images of him, and ſo to worſhip him in and through creatures, according to their own inventions; which is not the true worſhip, *Rom.* i. 21, 22, 23.

So likewiſe the Jews, not keeping to the manifeſtation of his light within them (to the word or commandment nigh in the mouth and heart, to which Moſes directed them), which would have taught and enabled them to have kept to the Law of the letter without them; they alſo ran into the nature and ſpirit of the heathen, and fell into imaginings and reaſonings, which led them to worſhip like them; inſomuch that they alſo changed their glory into the image of an ox, that eateth graſs, *Pſ.* cvi. 20.

Now from this part in man ariſeth all the uncertainty, and doubts, and diſſatisfaction about religion. And hence ariſe the opinions, and judgments, and reaſonings, in the minds of men: yea, indeed, the beſt of mens religion here is but an opinion or judgment, which the breath of God's Spirit will ſhake and diſſolve every-where, ſooner or later. All fleſh is graſs; and all the beauty of mens knowledge, religion, and worſhip here, will wither like graſs. All the buildings and churches that are raiſed here (how beautiful ſoever) are but Babylon, built by man's underſtanding, by man's knowledge, by man's comprehenſion, by man's wiſdom, by man's ſkill, and indeed in man's will and time, and their ſtanding, beauty, ſtrength, and glory, is but from man, and in man's day, and will fade away like a flower.

But

But the true certainty is in the day of God, from the light of his Spirit ſhining into man's ſpirit, from God's inward reaching to his heart by his power, and teſtifying his truth there. And this all the powers of darkneſs cannot prevail againſt in itſelf; no, nor againſt that man that is kept to it. For it is the rock (the only rock) upon which the whole church is built, and which cannot fail to preſerve every member of the church which is built upon it.

Ye then which would come to certainty in religion, obſerve the way which is made manifeſt from God in this our day, bleſſed be his name, which is this: mind the witneſs of God in thy heart, and come to, and build upon, the light thereof. Dwell not in reaſonings; take not up thy religion in reaſonings of the mind; but paſs through them, paſs beyond them, into a light of an higher nature. Wait to know the birth which is from God, and the light which he gives to that birth. What is the birth? Is not the birth of and from the ſecond Adam? And what is the heavenly birth's light? Is it not the light of the ſecond Adam? Is it not in nature and kind above the light of the firſt Adam? Where is the ſeat of reaſonings? Is it not the earthly mind, the fallen mind? Here lies man's ſtrength; here is man's wiſdom; here is man's life. It is ſo indeed; but the wiſdom of Chriſt, the light of Chriſt, the life of Chriſt, the power of Chriſt, is a croſs to this; finds it in the enmity againſt God, crucifies it, flays it, brings it to nothing; and he that will become wiſe as to God, muſt become a fool unto all this, a child, a babe, entering the kingdom without this, and muſt there remain naked as to this, and never put it on more.

Now obſerve (ye that have underſtanding and true ſenſe) the difference between the religion which God hath taught us, and led us into, and the religions of all men upon the earth beſides.

Our religion ſtands wholly *out* of that, which all their religion ſtands *in*. Their religion ſtands in the comprehenſion, in a belief of a literal relation or deſcription. Our religion ſtands in a principle which changeth the mind, wherein the Spirit of life appeareth to, and witneſſeth in the conſcience to and concerning the things of the kingdom; where we hear the voice, and ſee the expreſs image of the Inviſible One, and know things, not from an outward relation, but from their inward nature, virtue, and power. Yea, here (we muſt profeſs) we ſo know things, that we are fully ſatisfied about them, and could not doubt concerning them, though there never had been word or letter written of them; though indeed it is alſo a great comfort, and ſweet refreſhment to us, to read that teſtified of outwardly, which (through the tender mercy of our God) we feel and enjoy inwardly. And in this our whole religion conſiſts; to wit, in the ſilence and death of the fleſh, and in the quickening and flowing life of the Spirit. For he who is of the new-birth, of the new-creation, of the ſecond Adam (the Lord from heaven), is as really alive to God, and as really lives to him in his Spirit, as ever he was really dead in treſpaſſes and ſins in the time of his alienation and eſtrangement from God.

Of Tenderneſs of Spirit, and Perſecution.

HE which is born of God, he who is of the love, and in the love, cannot but be tender. He who is born of the earthly wiſdom, who taketh up and holdeth forth a religion there, cannot but perſecute. Why ſo? Becauſe he cannot but judge that any man may take up religion as he hath done, and ſo, by reaſonings, may come to acknowledge and take up what he hath taken up, and holdeth forth, or elſe he is wilful and ſtuborn, as he judgeth. But now he that is born of God, and hath received his light, knowledge, religion, and way of worſhip from him, he knoweth that no man can rightly receive them but the ſame way; to wit, from God, by the light which he cauſeth to ſhine into the heart at his pleaſure, and in the faith which he gives. So that God's free and powerful Spirit is to be waited upon, for the working of all in his people, and not any forced to act beyond, or contrary to, the principle of his life and light in them.

A QUERY concerning SEPARATION.

Query. WHETHER, after the apoſtaſy from the Spirit, life, and power of the apoſtles, and the getting up of the antichriſtian ſtate, church, and worſhip, there muſt not of neceſſity be a ſeparation from all theſe, before there can be a recovery of the life and power again, and of the true church-ſtate, which was brought forth in the days of the apoſtles? Muſt there not be a perfect coming out of the corrupt ſtate (in the whole nature, ſeveral parts and degrees of it) before there can be a reſtoration to, and witneſſing of, the true and pure ſtate? Muſt not the Chriſtians now come out of all the antichriſtian inventions and churches, as well as the Chriſtians of old came out of all the heatheniſh worſhip, yea, out of the Jewiſh worſhip and church (which once was of God) before they can become an holy building, an habitation to God in the Spirit? Yea, doth not the ſame Spirit which cried to the people of God then, *Come out from among them, and be ye ſeparate*, &c. call and cry now, *Come out of her, my people*, out of Babylon, out of the falſe church, out of all the antichriſtian buildings, which are reared up after the ſeveral forms and ways of mens inventing, being out of the Spirit, life, and power which alone is able to build up in and unto the Lord? And what is that which cries out againſt ſeparation, in the day of the Lord's dividing and ſeparating, but that ſpirit which

which would hold back the ſoul from being gathered to the Lord, in the chains of darkneſs, and in the land of death and confuſion?

Oh! that men knew that which divides and ſeparates, and which is appointed by God to divide and ſeparate both inwardly and outwardly, and might feel the full work and effect of it, even perfect ſeparation from all that is not of God, that ſo they might be joined to him, and built up in him, who is the life, reſt, peace, joy, and pure breath of the ſoul for ever! The word of God is quick and powerful, ſharper than any two-edged ſword; and what doth it do? Why it ſeparates between nation and nation, between church and church, between people and people, between cattle and cattle, between ſoul and ſoul, yea, between the thoughts and intents of the ſame heart; owning and cheriſhing all that is of the pure, and condemning and deſtroying all that is of the impure. And happy, oh! for ever happy is he, who can witneſs the work of this word perfected in his ſoul, even the axe of the Lord powerfully laid to, and having cut down all that is corrupt in him, that the pure plant of God may flouriſh, and bring forth fruit in him in peace, without annoyance or interruption of the impure. Then the river of life, as the ſtreams of everlaſting righteouſneſs, ſhall flow into the veſſel, and Jeruſalem become in and to him a quiet habitation, and nothing be able to hurt or deſtroy any thing of life in him, who dwells in, and abides on, the mountain of God's holineſs. Oh! bleſſed is the race of travellers, which in the pure light of the everlaſting day are travelling thitherwards, even with their hearts and faces faithfully bent towards Sion, which is the holy, ſpiritual, heavenly hill of God! And bleſſed, oh! bleſſed for ever is the Lord God of life and power, who is the faithful guider, leader, and conducter of all that follow the footſteps of the flock, in the way which is pure, true, living, and everlaſting.

Concerning the waſhing away of Sin from the Conſcience, and the Garment of Salvation, and what it is that is covered therewith.

THERE is ſomewhat appointed by God to waſh away ſin, which is the water of regeneration, the water of life, the Spirit's water, and the blood of the Lamb, which are known, received, and felt by faith in the light of the Spirit, wherein alone his work is wrought.

Thus now, upon believing, the ſoul is waſhed; the faith brings in, or lets in, the water and blood, which cleanſe and purge the conſcience from the ſin, which before ſtained and defiled it: and according to the faith, ſo is the water and blood let in, and accordingly is the waſhing. And he that

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is baptized, he that is waſhed by the Spirit, comes out of the water clean; and watching to the light wherein he was purified, witneſſeth the powerful word of life as able to preſerve in cleanneſs, as it was to cleanſe.

But if there be not a watch to, and faith in, and ſingle-hearted obedience to, that which purified, and keepeth pure, there is that near which will defile, where it is hearkened to and let in; there is that which will tempt to luſt and ſin, and ſo draw into darkneſs and death again. And if any man ſin afterwards, ſin defiles again, and the ſtain thereof will lie upon the conſcience, till by repentance and faith the water and blood be let in again, and the cleanſing virtue from it received and reſtored again. So that if any man ſin, there is an * advocate, an interceſſor, a divine helper, one who hath the water of life, and the blood of life to waſh with. There is a fountain ſet open for ſin, and for uncleanneſs, for Judah and Jeruſalem to waſh therefrom; but every defilement and pollution ſticks until it be waſhed off.

Now there are ſins of ſeveral kinds. Some are eaſily remitted and waſhed off, inſomuch as the ſtain is hardly felt by the ſoul, the tender mercy and pure life doth ſo readily and naturally flow over them. Some again are long held and bound by the Spirit upon the conſcience, and often remembered to the heart, which is apt to backſlide: yea, there is in ſome caſes a ſevere judgment, and a long waiting on the Lord for his mercy, and for his renewing and enlivening of faith, before the water and blood which waſheth can be again felt. For faith is not in a man's power, nor repentance neither; but they are given of God, to whom and when he pleaſeth. And a man that is in part converted, may give ear to the enemy, and let in ſin and death upon the ſoul; but he cannot repent again preſently, nor believe again preſently; but as God breathes upon him, and revives the work of faith and repentance in him.

There were ſins under the old covenant, and there are ſins under the new. The ſins of the old covenant did lie upon him that committed them, until they were expiated according to the law of the old covenant; and ſins under the new covenant lie alſo upon the ſoul and conſcience, until they be expiated according to the law of the new covenant; which is until the advocate interpoſe and plead with the Father, and give faith and repentance to the ſoul, and ſprinkle upon the heart and conſcience that water and blood which hath virtue in it to waſh. And if it were not for this after-waſhing (as I may ſo ſay) no man could be ſaved: but though he were once waſhed, yet ſinning again afterwards, he would die in his ſins (and ſo fall under condemnation), unleſs he were again waſhed. Oh! bleſſed be the name of the Lord, for the water and blood of the covenant, and

* But this is not the ſtate of them that ſin wilfully after they have received the knowledge of truth.

for

for his continual pouring them out upon the ſouls of his, in the light that is eternal!

Now as men come to the truth as it is in Jeſus, they will find their own aprehenſions about theſe things to have been but dreams, wherewith the enemy hath fed and pleaſed them, while he hath lulled them aſleep in the night of darkneſs, that he might the better ſteal away the true weighty knowledge of the things of the kingdom from them. Thus men have dreamed about juſtification, about ſanctification, about regeneration, about redemption, about faith, hope, love, righteouſneſs, peace, joy, &c. And have been miſtaken about them, miſſing of that power and light whereby and wherein they are revealed and made manifeſt. Now he that will rightly know theſe things, muſt know them in the feeling and true experience; and therein he ſhall find all theſe are wrought in a myſterious way of pure life's operation, out of the reach of man's comprehenſion; and no man can underſtand them, but as the new and holy underſtanding is given him; nor retain the ſenſe and knowledge of them, but as he abides in the new nature, and retains the new underſtanding.

So for the garment of ſalvation; that is Chriſt, the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, the nature of Chriſt, the Spirit of Chriſt. This is the holy covering. He that puts on Chriſt, puts on this: he that wears Chriſt, wears this: he that appears before God in Chriſt, appears in this; and the ſoul puts on this, as it puts off the other. It is the purified ſoul that only puts on him that is pure: and as a man is cleanſed from the impure, ſo only hath he in him a capacity of receiving and being cloathed with Chriſt. And this now is the work of the true miniſtry; to wit, to preach the Word, to reveal the Word, and bring the mind to the Word (which changeth it, and begets the new capacity), and ſo to begin the work of life and reconciliation, wherein and whereby there is ſome uncloathing of the old, and ſome cloathing with the new; and ſo to carry on this work in the Spirit and power of the Father until it be perfected. And this is a bleſſed work, and bleſſed is the miniſtry which is called to, and entruſted with, this work, being faithful in it: and bleſſed are they that witneſs the truth of, and receive the effect of, this miniſtry, and are ſubject to it in the Lord. For through and under this miniſtry there is a receiving of a perfect gift in ſome meaſure at firſt (wherein ſome true union and little acquaintance with the Lord of life is at firſt witneſſed, and ſome operation of the light and power of his Holy Spirit): and a growing up in it unto perfection, as the ſoul is exerciſed by it, and faithful to the Lord in the exerciſe, under the daily croſs, which daily worketh againſt and crucifieth in the heart, mind, life, and converſation whatever is contrary to God, as it is ſingly waited for, taken up, and ſubjected to.

SOME

QUESTIONS and ANSWERS,

CONCERNING

The Church of the New Covenant, the Rock or Foundation whereon it is built, and its Preſervation by and upon the Rock. With ſome QUERIES concerning the ſcattered Eſtate of the true Church, and concerning that Church which got up in its ſtead, and made a great Shew with her golden Cup, for the Time while the true Church was ſcattered.

Queſt. 1. *WHAT is the church of God under the new agreement or covenant?*

Anſw. It is a company of living ſtones, quickened by God, and knit together in the unity and fellowſhip of his Spirit, to worſhip God together in his Spirit, and offer up unto him ſpiritual ſacrifices, acceptable to God by Jeſus Chriſt. What was the church of the old covenant? Was it not the ſeed of Abraham, the outward Jews, the children of the old covenant? And what is the church of the new covenant? Is it not the ſeed of God, the Jews inward, the children of the new covenant?

Queſt. *How are theſe ſtones joined together?*

Anſw. By the Spirit of life, which begets them all in one nature, and knits them together in that nature. By the inward circumciſion, cutting off that which cauſeth enmity and diſunion, and ſo fitting them to be made one new lump in Chriſt. By Chriſt's baptiſm, which is the baptiſm of fire and of his Spirit, which burns up the old earthly nature, and ſo baptizes them into one new living body, ſuitable and fitting to their head, which is the fountain of life, and diſtributes life through all the body, according to its capacity, need, and ſervice.

Queſt. *Upon what is this church built?*

Anſw. Upon the rock or foundation of God, which God hath laid in his ſpiritual Sion; which rock is Chriſt. For *other foundation can no man lay, than that which is laid, which is Jeſus Chriſt*; nor other rock did the Lord ever chuſe for his church to be built upon; nor hath any other rock ſufficient

dent ſtrength to bear up the building againſt the ſtorms and ſtreſs of the powers of darkneſs, which it often meeteth with, even every member, in its travels; after it is once built on the rock, the gates of hell preſs hard upon it; but abiding on the rock, it feels the ſtrength and preſervation of the rock. For as they cannot prevail againſt Chriſt, ſo neither can they prevail againſt that which is built upon him. But if there be a going forth from the ſtrength and preſervation, there is a liableneſs to be made a prey. And the promiſe is not abſolutely and perpetually to that perſon or congregation which is received or let into the truth; but to that perſon or church which abideth and continueth in the truth unto the end. The Jews were ſafe in the faith and obedience of their covenant; and the Chriſtians, or Chriſtian churches, are not ſafe but in the faith and obedience of theirs. For if they walked not humbly with the Lord, and in his fear, which keeps the heart from departing from him, and in the faith whereby they ſtand, they were to be cut off from their church-ſtate, as well as the Jews were from theirs, as the apoſtle Paul expreſly tells the church at Rome, *Rom.* xi. 21, 22.

Queſt. 4. *What was Paul?*

Anſw. The apoſtle of the Gentiles, who laboured abundantly, even more abundantly than all the other apoſtles; and hath left more inſtructions relating to the Gentiles than all the apoſtles beſides; and was tender of them, in ſtanding for and defending their liberty in Chriſt, when Peter a little warped, and was to be blamed; *Gal.* ii. 11. For indeed man cannot be certain and infallible, further than he keepeth to, and is exerciſed by, the certain and infallible Spirit; which he is ſubject to be tempted to err from, further than he ſtands upon the watch; and cannot but err from, unleſs he feel a continual preſervation in the fear, and by the power of the Lord. And the certainty of truth doth not depend ſo much upon the perſon from whom it is received, as upon the demonſtration and evidence to the conſcience wherein it is received. The apoſtles were not lords over the true Chriſtians faith; but helpers of their joy. And Chriſt did not require his diſciples to believe whatever he knew to be true; but prepared their capacities, and dropped in according to their capacities. And this is the way of the true miniſters, to wait on God to beget, and on him again to water the begotten ſoul, and carry on his work in it; to make them know Chriſt their maſter, from whom they are to receive light, life, inſtruction, and direction; and to feel the head, and be joined to the head, and receive from the head their knowledge, as well the leaſt as the greateſt, *Heb.* viii. What is Paul? What is Apollos? What is Cephas? Were not they carnal that cried up theſe one above another? Yet the younger ought to be ſubject to the elder, and all to be ſubject one to another in the truth, 1 *Pet.* v. 5.

Queſt. 5. *What was Peter?*

Anſw. One of the diſciples of Chriſt, a precious ſtone in the building (*John* i. 43.) one of the moſt eminent apoſtles, even the choſen miniſter to

them of the circumciſion, as Paul was to the Gentiles. But he knew that Chriſt was the only rock or foundation, as well as Paul, and that Chriſt alone was able to bear the weight of that building, and to defend it againſt the gates of hell; and he never had commiſſion, nor can it be proved that he ever preached himſelf the rock, but he preached Chriſt the foundation-ſtone, the rock of offence, the rock of defence, *&c.* ſee 1 *Pet.* ii. 4. and *ver.* 6, 7, 8. And if an angel from heaven, or any man or church on earth, ſo interpret any ſcripture, as to hold forth any ſuch thing, that any elſe beſides Chriſt is the rock, they plainly ſhew that they are erred from the truth, and that their interpretation is of their own private ſpirit, and not that public Spirit which all the prophets of God, and apoſtles, and truly holy men, were guided by.

Queſt. 6. *Was the church always to be a gathered company? Or was there a poſſibility of their being ſcattered?*

Anſw. There was a poſſibility of their being ſcattered, yea, a certainty, if they grew corrupt in doctrine and practice, and kept not the faith, *Rom.* xi. For the Lord God intended a pure building, a ſpiritual building, fit to offer the ſpiritual ſacrifices, 1 *Pet.* ii. 5. An holy people, ſeparated from the world, 2 *Cor.* vi. 17. in which he might dwell and walk, *ver.* 16. If therefore any church depart from the Spirit, and life, and power of the apoſtles, and mix again with the world, loſing their own proper pale which fenced from the world, they ſoon loſe that which maketh them a church of God, and ſo become a ſynagogue of Satan.

Now it is in my heart alſo to propound a few queries concerning the ſcattered and hidden eſtate and condition of the church, and concerning that church which got up in the view of the world, and was acknowledged by the world inſtead thereof afterwards.

Queſt. 1. Whether the true church did retain her miniſtry outwardly, and her outward ordinances, and way of worſhip of the outward court, after her ſcattering? Or whether the falſe church, which appeared in her room as if ſhe had been the true, caught up and appeared in the outwardneſs of theſe? The grounds of this query are theſe following?

1. Becauſe, upon God's meaſuring of his temple and worſhippers, the outward court (conſider well what that is, and how far it extends) was left out of God's meaſure; ſo that he intended to reckon it no longer as his, but given by him to the Gentile Chriſtians; ſuch as were Chriſtians or Jews in name, but Gentiles in ſpirit and nature, *Rev.* xi.

2. Becauſe in the laſt days, when that ſtrange generation of Chriſtians was to ſpring up, who ſhould be lovers of their own ſelves, covetous, proud, blaſphemers, diſobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, falſe-accuſers, incontinent, fierce, deſpiſers of thoſe that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleaſures more than lovers of God; yet theſe ſhould have a form of godlineſs, but deny the power thereof, 2 *Tim.* iii. 1, to 6. Now mind; the temple wherein was

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the power, God had removed with the true worſhippers; but the outward court (wherein was the appearance of ſome kind of a form of a church, miniſtry, and ordinances) thoſe had got, and were found worſhipping in it, in the midſt of all this great wickedneſs and abomination of ſpirit.

3. Becauſe the Jews (who were the type) while they were in captivity in Babylon, could not ſing the ſongs of Sion, nor had the worſhip of the outward Jeruſalem there.

And can the ſpiritual Jews ſing the ſpiritual ſongs of ſpiritual Sion, in Myſtery-Babylon? No; there they are but witneſſes to that life and power which the true church enjoyed and flouriſhed with, in her built eſtate.

Queſt. 2. Whether this is not an infallible mark, and moſt certain demonſtration of the falſe church, her ſitting upon many waters; which waters are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues? Did not the Spirit of the Lord thus mark her out to John, *Rev.* xvii. 15. Did the true church ever ſit upon many waters? Was not the church a gathering out of the nations into the power and life which the nations perſecuted? But the falſe church ſits over the nations with a form of godlineſs, but without the true power thereof. Then if this be a mark that God hath ſet upon her, let every one wait to read it aright, that he may know thereby which is ſhe, and praiſe the name of the Lord for diſcovering her to him.

Queſt. 3. Whether this falſe church be not rightly called Babylon, even an heap of confuſion (in a myſtery) as to God's eye, though to man's eye her appearance may be orderly and decent? And whether ſhe be not juſtly termed, by the Spirit of the Lord, the great whore, both for largeneſs in bulk, and for the greatneſs of her fornications, having whored from the bed of the huſband, and entered into the bed of a ſtranger; and having taught and compelled others to acknowledge and worſhip in her forms; which, thus held forth and maintained by her, are not only without, but alſo againſt, the true power?

Queſt. 4. Whether antichriſt be not entered into, and become the head of, this falſe church? And whether he doth not ſit there ruling in it, even as Chriſt was head of the true, and ſat ruling in the true? And whether antichriſt doth not keep his hold of this church, and poſſeſs his ſeat in it, for many ages and generations, even from the time he got in after the days of the apoſtles, till the very coming of Chriſt in his power and brightneſs? 2 *Theſſ.* ii.

Queſt. 5. Whether the great plagues, woes, terrible thunders, and cups of God's indignation, ſpoken of in the book of the *Revelations*, are not to be poured, in their ſeveral orders and degrees, upon this falſe church, and upon antichriſt, her beloved head and king, even till ſhe be ſtripped naked, made deſolate, and her fleſh burnt with fire, and her head bruiſed and deſtroyed by Chriſt, the true head and king of the true church?

Queſt. 6. Whether the people of God, ſuch as feel ſomewhat of the power, and bow to the Lord in Spirit and truth in ſome meaſure; yet

theſe, if they mind not his call out of this Babylon, and come not fully out of her, but abide in any part of her, obſerving any of her ways or worſhips, till the time of God's controverſy with her, and judging of her, whether they alſo ſhall not partake of her plagues? *Rev.* xviii. 4.

Queſt. 7. Whether all people have not great reaſon to fear before the Lord, and to look to their ways and worſhips, leſt they be found in any thing therein which is not of him, but contrary to him, and ſo bring upon their ſouls and bodies that wrath and fore judgment from God, which they are not able to bear? *Rev.* xiv. 9, 10, 11.

Queſt. 8. Whether it was not the great love and mercy of God to warn the churches of theſe things in the book of the *Revelations?* And whether he can be ſafe in theſe reſpects, who either doth not underſtand, or not obſerve, the warnings given by the Spirit of the Lord therein? How often is it therein ſaid, *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit of God ſaith to the churches.* It is alſo ſaid, *Bleſſed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep thoſe things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.* He then that readeth not, that hath not an ear to hear the words of this prophecy, how can he keep what is written therein? How can he beware and avoid the ſeeming beauty and glory of the falſe church, or ſuffer with the faithful witneſſes of God in their teſtimony againſt her? And if he do not thus, but is entangled by the falſe church with her golden cup of fornications (*Rev.* xvii. 4.), he miſſeth of the bleſſing; and ah! what is he to meet with inſtead thereof! My heart hath often melted within me, and my bowels rolled at the conſideration and deep ſenſe which the Lord hath given me of theſe things; and this I ſay therein, to thoſe that deſire life and peace from God, Oh! wait on him for the eye which ſees in his light, for the ear which hears his voice, and for the heart which underſtands the words and meſſages of his Spirit, that ye may feel his gathering, guidance, and preſervation out of that, to which his wrath is for ever, and againſt which his wrath is to be made more manifeſt, and poured out more fully and abundantly than ever it yet was. For the Lord will empty his love and his life into Sion, and empty the very dregs and thick mixtures of the cups of his indignation into the very heart and bowels of Babylon; and her ſickneſs, miſery, woe, death, and deſtruction will be exceeding dreadful and unutterable. Therefore wait on the Lord in fear and ſingleneſs of ſpirit, crying and mourning unto him to diſcover to you the extent and limits of this falſe church, this falſe building, this building in a form and outward order, without the life and power of the Spirit; and then fly as faſt out of her, and from her (and as far) as the Spirit of the Lord leads, even till ye come to the holy building, which is of him, and the heavenly places which are prepared there by him, for every one of his (according to their growth and ſtature in his Son) that ye may ſit down in him.

Some

Some QUERIES to PROFESSORS, who ſpeak of high Attainments and Experiences in Religion, and yet do not witneſs, nor can acknowledge, the Truth, as the LORD hath now revealed it (and done great things by it in the Spirits of his People), but look upon it as a poor, mean, and low thing.

Query 1. HAVE ye known the great and terrible day of the Lord, wherein he ariſeth to ſhake terribly the earth? And have ye known that ſhaken down in you which muſt be ſhaken down and removed as a cottage, before the everlaſting kingdom can be eſtabliſhed in you?

Query 2. Do ye know the living, powerful, eternal word, which is quick and piercing, ſharper than any two-edged ſword, dividing between thought and thought, grace and grace (as I may ſo ſpeak), light and light, life and life, ſpirit and ſpirit, power and power? *&c.* Have ye known it an hammer, a fire, an axe laid to the root of the corrupt tree? And do ye know the corrupt tree (root, branches, leaves, and fruit) ſo cut down by it as to cumber the ground no more?

Query 3. Do ye know the paradiſe of God, and the tree of life there? Do ye indeed feed thereon? Have you paſſed through the flaming ſword to the tree of life? And is the flaming ſword (which once fenced from life, and the power thereof) ſet now to fence up the way to the tree of knowledge, that ye may feed no more thereon, and die, but feed only on that which is life, and gives life, and ſo live for ever?

Query 4. Have ye witneſſed the effects of the great and terrible day of the Lord in your ſpirits? Is antichriſt deſtroyed, the whore burnt, fleſh conſumed, man ceaſed from, both within and without? Is the loftineſs of man bowed down in you, the mighty removed out of his ſeat, and the meek, holy, humble ſeed raiſed up to rule in righteouſneſs in your hearts? Is every high tower battered down, and every fenced wall laid flat? Are all your imaginations, and conceivings, and fleſhly apprehendings upon ſcriptures, yea, every pleaſant picture and image of the things in heaven (formed in your minds) brought to an end, and the pure living truth of the Father waited for, received from him, and lived in? Yea, is the Lord alone exalted in your ſpirits, and all other dominion, authority, rule, and lordſhip put under?

Query 5. Do ye know the mountain of the Lord's houſe, and the Lord's houſe built and eſtabliſhed by his own Holy Spirit and power upon his own holy

holy mountain? And do ye worſhip the Lord alone therein? Do ye come up to the New Jeruſalem, to offer your ſacrifices there, according to the inſtitution of the goſpel? And do ye worſhip the Lord there, on his own day, which he hath ſpiritually made? And do ye bear no burden, kindle no fire, do no work on that his day? Do ye never warm yourſelves at any fire, or by any ſparks of your own kindling? Or are ye yet worſhipping upon ſome of the many mountains and hills which the Lord hath not formed nor eſtabliſhed; but have been formed and ſet up by man in the night of darkneſs, before the everlaſting light of the day brake forth?

Query 6. Do ye know the wilderneſs through which the paſſage is from Egypt to Canaan? And have ye faithfully travelled in the leadings of God's Spirit there-through? And are ye entered into the pure reſt thereof? Are ye not under the law, but under grace; not under the enemy's power, but under the Spirit's power, out of the other's reach, ſo that the wicked-one cannot touch you? Have ye gone through the exerciſes and trials of the wilderneſs? Have ye fed on the manna dropt down from heaven upon your ſpirits therein? Have ye drunk of the water of the rock? Have ye ſeen the ſerpent lifted up, and felt the healing thereby? Have ye witneſſed the pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night, to be your defence and leader? And have ye now at length received the kingdom of life, and ſit under the ſhadow of it, drinking water out of your own ciſtern, and eating under your own vine and fig-tree the fruits of the good land, after the ſhaking of that which was to be ſhaken; now being come to, and enjoying the kingdom which cannot be ſhaken? Have ye really felt theſe things, or have ye been in the dreams and imaginings about them?

Query 7. Do ye walk in the light of the Lord, as the ſpiritual houſe of Jacob is to do? Have ye received the Spirit? Do ye live in the Spirit? Are ye truly united, ſo as to become one ſpirit with the Lord? Are all the walls of partition broken down? And is there nothing now between you, but of two ye are made one in that which uniteth?

If it be thus with you, then hold forth the right-hand of fellowſhip to thoſe whom the Lord hath brought hither; and know and acknowledge that whereby the Lord hath wrought it in them. But if ye be not really in the thing itſelf, but only in the apprehenſions and conceivings about it, ye can never ſo be witneſſes concerning theſe things, nor concerning the truth whereby God works theſe things: and ye will find there is a great gulf between you and us, which ye cannot poſſibly paſs over, till ye meet with our principle and guide, and faithfully travel with him in the foot-ſteps of the flock, that ye may come to the ſhepherd's tents (even the tents which the ſhepherd pitcheth, and which no man can pitch) and may know the true tabernacle, ſanctuary, and temple, whereof he is the miniſter.

OF THE

CHURCH,

IN ITS

FIRST and PURE STATE,

IN

Its Declining STATE, in its Declined STATE, and in its RECOVERY.

WITH THE

WAY of SALVATION in the COVENANT of LIFE opened,

AND

Some STUMBLING-BLOCKS Removed out of the Way of the SIMPLE-HEARTED.

Likewiſe ſome QUERIES concerning the NEW COVENANT.

WITH

An EXHORTATION to all People; but more eſpecially to ſuch as are Deſolate and Diſtreſſed.

By one who teſtifieth what he hath ſeen, and heard, and taſted, and handled of the Word, and Life Eternal,

ISAAC PENINGTON.

Whereunto is added,

A Viſit of tender and upright Love to ſuch as retain a Sincerity towards the LORD.

Alſo, A brief Account of the Ground of Certainty and Satisfaction, which it hath pleaſed the LORD to eſtabliſh in my Heart, concerning Religion, and the Things of his Kingdom.

And a QUESTION anſwered, about the Way of knowing the Motions, Doctrines, and Teachings of CHRIST's Spirit.

With ſomewhat relating to the GOSPEL-REST, or SABBATH.

And ſome QUERIES to ſuch as complain of Want of Power to become the LORD's, and ſerve him.

THE PREFACE.

THE true church is a myſtery, and ſo is the falſe alſo; neither of which the outward eye of man's underſtanding is able to diſcern; but he alone who is enlightened and taught of God. Who can ſee how the Spirit of God works, changing mens hearts, gathering them into his truth, and building them up into an holy temple in his Son? And who can diſcern how the ſpirit of deceit works with an outward knowledge, doctrine, and form of religion, perſuading or compelling men thereunto, and ſo builds up a falſe church? Yea, who can tell when the Spirit of the Lord withdraweth from a church, which was once his, leaving it to the other ſpirit to re-enter and poſſeſs; from which time it becometh a ſynagogue of Satan? There was need of the anointing of God's wiſdom and Spirit to try Jews and Apoſtles (for there were ſuch, even in the apoſtles days, as ſaid they were ſo, but were not); and there is alſo need of the ſame wiſdom and Spirit to try churches, whether they be indeed the churches of Chriſt (in and of his Spirit and power), or only in the name and outward profeſſion of the thing, without the nature, Spirit, life, and power thereof.

The apoſtle Paul (who was the apoſtle of the Gentiles, and knew what was likely to be their future ſtate) writing to the Romans, tells them, that the Gentiles were cut out of the olive-tree, which was wild by nature; and were, contrary to nature, ingrafted into the true olive-tree, and ſo came to partake of the root and fatneſs thereof. But withal he tells them, that unleſs they did continue in the faith, and in the goodneſs of God, keeping out of the high-mindedneſs and conceitedneſs of their own eſtate and condition, in the fear (which makes the heart clean, and preſerves it in the cleanneſs from that which would defile, and cauſe it to depart from the Lord) they likewiſe ſhould be cut off, *Rom.* xi. 17. and 20, *&c.*

Now it would ſeriouſly be conſidered, whether the Gentile churches did abide in the faith, and in the goodneſs and power of the Lord, which gathered them? Or whether they grew high-minded, holding their eſtate in a pre-

preſumption (as if the promiſe was ſo to them, that they muſt needs be the church for ever) out of the fear, and ſo was caſt off by God, and cut off (according to the apoſtle's words) from God's Spirit, and ſo have not partook of the root and fatneſs of the Olive-tree, for many generations? It would alſo farther be enquired (if it prove thus, upon true ſearch and examination, that they have been cut off); whether they can partake of the root and fatneſs of the true Olive-tree any more, till he that caſt them off, gather and build them up again?

It is true, there have been witneſſes againſt the corrupt ſtate, even a ſeed who have been perſecuted by it; and theſe have, in ſome meaſure, partook of the root and fatneſs of the Olive-tree, all this time of the degeneration. But hath the church-ſtate of the Gentiles, which provoked God, and was caſt off, and perſecuted the witneſſes of the Lamb, his holy ſeed, who could not but, in his nature and Spirit, teſtify againſt their corruption? Have they partook of the root and fatneſs of the Olive-tree, or have they not rather grown up from, and drunk in of, the ſap and juice of another ſtock?

The ſame apoſtle ſpeaks of the man of ſin, that wicked one, the ſon of perdition; who ſhould get into the temple of God, ſit there, and ſhew himſelf as God; and yet oppoſe and exalt himſelf above all that is truly called God, and that of right ought to be worſhipped, 2 *Theſ.* ii. 4. Now when he gets into the temple, doth not he leaven it with his wicked ſpirit, making it become wicked, like him that ſits and reigns in it, and is the head of it? And not the church or temple, all the while he ſits in it, partake of the root and fatneſs of the Olive-tree? (Of Chriſt its former vine, of Chriſt its former head)? Or doth it not rather ſuck in, and partake of, the venom and poiſon of this new head? And how long is this new head, this falſe head of the church, to ſit in the temple? Is it not from the very time of his getting in, till Chriſt, by the Spirit of his mouth, conſume and ſcatter him; and by the brightneſs of his appearance and coming utterly deſtroy him? *ver.* 8.

This is certain (as certain as ever there was a true church in the days of the apoſtles), that after the apoſtles days there got up a falſe church, which the Spirit of the Lord calls the great whore (indeed ſhe was far bigger, by multitudes of degrees, than ever the true church was). This great whore had a golden cup in her hand, wherewith ſhe made the kings and inhabitants of the earth drunk. And ſhe ſat upon many waters; which waters are peoples, nations, multitudes, and tongues. Did ever the true church do thus? That was a little flock, gathered out of peoples, nations, multitudes, and tongues, reigning in the Spirit and power of the Lord, over them only who were thus gathered; but never ſat upon whole peoples, nations, multitudes, and tongues, as this great whore hath done, *Rev.* xvii. 1.—15.

Now it would be worth the enquiry what this cup is (this golden cup, which appears like gold)? And what this wine is, wherewith ſhe made the kings and inhabitants of the earth drunk? Aſk her, and ſhe will tell you,

It is the cup of ſalvation, and her wine the wine of the kingdom, even the doctrine and diſcipline of holy mother-church; out of which, and without which, no man can be ſaved. But aſk the Spirit of the Lord (or hear what the Spirit of the Lord ſaid to the churches concerning it) and he will tell you, it is the wine of fornication, the cup of deſtruction, full of abominations, and filthineſs of her fornication; and that ſhe ſhall be ſo far from ſaving others, that ſhe ſhall be deſtroyed and periſh herſelf; and whoever drinks of her wine ſhall periſh, unleſs he vomit it up again, and drink of the pure blood of the Lamb after it. See *Rev.* xvii. and alſo chap. xviii. and chap. xiv. 9, 10, 11.

Now one word, in the love and truth of God, to all that have ſeparated from this church. Have ye ſeparated fully? Have ye ſeparated wholly? Have ye ſeparated from her in nature and ſpirit? Have ye waited for the building which God alone can rear; for the church which he alone can frame? Or have ye built up another church, in the reſemblance and likeneſs of that ye ſeparated from? This is a weighty thing: Ye muſt anſwer it to God, and ſtand by his judgment therein. I beſeech you conſider it. *What will it profit a man*, ſaith Chriſt, *if he gain the whole world, and loſe his own ſoul*? So ſay I in this Caſe: What would it profit you, if ye could make your church ſtand, and be approved in the ſight of the whole world, if the Lord diſown and diſallow it, and they that are gathered into it periſh by it? If it be not of God's building, if it have not his preſence, virtue, Spirit and power in it, it cannot ſave. Oh! hear, hear! for the Lord will ſtrip Babylon, and fill her with dreadful plagues and judgments; and ſhe ſhall appear naked as ſhe is, and become the ſcorn of every eye, and the reproach of every beholder: and that which hath been reproached, ſcorned, hated, and perſecuted by her, the Lord will honour.

Now conſider, and wait on the Lord, to know the extent of Babylon; that ye may not be found by the Spirit of the Lord (nor by his angels, which pour out his plagues upon her) within her limits. For the Great Whore is not Babylon only, or alone; but ſhe is the Mother of harlots, and all her Daughters are harlots alſo; even all that have built up churches, like her (in her ſpirit, with her materials) out of the leading, guidance, and power of the Spirit of truth.

OF

OF THE CHURCH.

I. Of the CHURCH in its Firſt and Pure State, when it was cloathed with the Sun, had the Moon under its Feet, and was crowned with the Crown of Twelve Stars, travailing to Bring-forth, and Brought-forth the Man-Child, which was to Rule all Nations with the Rod of Iron.

IT pleaſed the Father to ſend his Son into the world (in his name, power, and authority), to gather out of the world; and to manifeſt his name to the men whom he ſhould gather out of the world. The Jews (for all their great profeſſion, and high eſteem of themſelves) were but a worldly polity, having but worldly, elementary ſhadows of the good things to come, and to be ſet up in the kingdom of the Meſſiah. John preached, *That the kingdom was at hand*; Chriſt ſaid, *It was come*: John prepared for it; Chriſt brought it. He came in the Spirit, in the life, in the virtue, in the dominion of the Moſt High; and he gathered diſciples unto him, by the word and power of the Father. And thoſe that continued in his word, were his diſciples indeed; of his gathering; ſuch as the Father had ſent the Son out to ſeek; even the new ſort of worſhippers, who ſhould worſhip neither at Samaria, nor Jeruſalem; nor with reference to any other outward place; but in Spirit and in truth. They ſhould meet together in that name, wherein Chriſt had gathered them; and meeting ſo, he would be in the midſt of them, and they ſhould feel the preſence, power, and authority, which belonged to his church.

Now, if any would know what kind of perſons theſe diſciples are, Chriſt giveth many deſcriptions of them. They are ſuch as are born from above, ſuch as are changed by the name and power which gathers them. They are Jews inward, circumciſed inwardly; ſuch as are baptized with the Holy Ghoſt, and with fire; ſquared ſtones, hewn by the Spirit, for the ſpiritual building; not old, rough, fierce, cruel, implacable, unregenerate, unholy ſpirits; but meek, gentle, lowly, tender, poor in ſpirit, merciful,

ciful, peaceable in themſelves, and making peace among men, renewed, and ſanctified in ſpirit; holy in converſation, ſuffering (both from the heatheniſh, and from the worldly-profeſſing ſpirit) for that power of truth and righteouſneſs, which they profeſs and bear witneſs to. They are the ſalt of the earth, having that in them which ſeaſoneth their own hearts, and which hath virtue in it to ſeaſon others. They are the light of the world, having that in them which caſts rays of light, conviction, and demonſtration, where-ever they go. They being changed into the leaven of the kingdom, become a leaven, and ſo a weight upon iniquity; teſtifying againſt, yea, bowing down and afflicting that ſpirit, as the power of life ſprings in them and breaks forth through them.

Now, if the church be thus; if it be a gathering by the power into the power; by Chriſt, who came in the name, into the name in which he came; muſt not the miniſtry needs be much more thus? Muſt not they be grown in the name, be grown in the power, who are to miniſter to thoſe who are gathered into the name, who are gathered into the power? Muſt not they be well grown in the Spirit, if they be able miniſters of the Spirit? Did not Chriſt, when he ſent out his diſciples to preach in his name, give them of his Spirit and power? And afterwards, when he was to go away, and they to ſucceed him, what were they to ſucceed him in? Were they not to ſucceed him in his Spirit and power? And did not he bid them wait for it, and receive it, before they went forth to preach and ſet up his kingdom? And was it not by this the church was gathered? And can the church be preſerved by any thing beneath this? Yea, falling ſhort of this, is it not in a degenerated and fallen eſtate?

After that thoſe who had been gathered in the name, had waited as Chriſt directed them, for the holy Spirit and power, and after it had fallen upon them, then the glory began, then the miniſtry ſhined, then the church (or people gathered in the Spirit and power) ſhined; then great life was in them all, then great grace and holineſs was upon them all, then faith (which ſprings from the Spirit and power) was freſh, then love abounded; then they minded not earthly things, but the kingdom, the life, the glory, which was come upon them in power; then Satan's kingdom fell down like lightening, and they went on (in and with the Spirit which led them) conquering the Jewiſh profeſſors, and the Heatheniſh worſhippers alſo; none being able to reſiſt the power and Spirit wherein they ſpake and miniſtered. Read the ſcriptures of the New-Teſtament, and wait on God for the opening of the true eye in you; and theſe things will be manifeſt and plain to you therein; for the ſweetneſs, freſhneſs, precioufneſs, and beauty of that ſtate, may abundantly be read there, by thoſe whoſe eyes the Lord opens. To inſtance in ſome places.

Peter writes two general epiſtles, in one whereof he ſpeaks of their having received like precious faith with them, 2 *Peter* i. 1. and in the other, that they did rejoice with joy unſpeakable and full of glory, 1 *Peter* i. 8.

Yea,

Yea, he ſpeaks alſo of their being as lively ſtones, built up a ſpiritual houſe, an holy prieſthood (mark; all God's people who are gathered into the name, who are of the faith, who are in the life and power, are prieſts unto him) to offer up ſpiritual ſacrifices, acceptable to God by Jeſus Chriſt, 1 *Peter* ii. 5. Now was it a ſmall thing to be a prieſt under the law, to offer up the outward ſacrifices thereof? What is it then to be a prieſt in the Holy Spirit and power of life?

John alſo writes a general epiſtle, wherein he divides Chriſtians into three eſtates (children, young men, fathers), ſpeaking great things and glorious of them all. He ſaid, *The darkneſs is paſt*, and *the true light now ſhineth.* Paul had ſaid, The night is far ſpent, and the day is at hand; but he ſaid, the night is paſt, and the day is come, 1 *John* ii. 8. And he writes to all (children, young men, fathers), as being paſſed from the darkneſs, and in the light of the day. The little children had had their ſins forgiven them for his name's ſake, and had known the Father, *ver.* 12, 13. The young men were ſtrong, and the word of God did abide in them, and they had overcome the wicked one, *ver.* 14. The fathers knew him that was from the beginning, *ver.* 13, 14. and knowing that, they knew enough; for that was it which appeared to ſave, and that was it which was to be preached, even that which was from the beginning, the light which was with God, the light which was in God, the light which was God, in which is no darkneſs at all, *chap.* i. 1. 5. Yea the little children had an unction from the Holy One, and they knew all things; and John wrote not unto them as not knowing the truth, but becauſe they knew it, *chap.* ii. 18. 20, 21. Yea, they had received the anointing, and it did abide in them, and they needed not that any man ſhould teach them, but as the ſame anointing taught them of all things; and it ſo taught them, as that no ſeducer nor antichriſtian deceiver could impoſe or prevail upon them, they keeping to it, *ver.* 18.—26, 27. What a glorious ſtate was here when the little children were thus advanced in the ſtrength and power of life? Sure that promiſe was now made good indeed, *Ye ſhall be all taught of God*, when the little children were thus taught. Yea, and they were taught to abide in him, ſo as they might not ſin; for how could they, the anointing abiding in them, and teaching them of all things, and they being in ſubjection thereto; for that preſerves out of ſin the veſſel in whom it dwells and reigns. Sin is a tranſgreſſion of the law; but they that are in the anointing, taught by the anointing, ſubject to the anointing, are far above the righteouſneſs of the law, even in the righteouſneſs of the Son; the righteouſneſs of whoſe nature is far above the righteouſneſs which the law requires of man's nature. And let men talk and imagine what they will, the ſinner is not in the redemption and power of righteouſneſs, which is by Jeſus Chriſt. For that which is born of God doth not commit ſin, but the ſeed remaineth in him which is born of God, preſerving him from the nature and ſpirit of the Devil, and from the works which flow from that nature.

nature and ſpirit, *chap.* iii. 4. *&c.* Yea, they might ſo walk as that their hearts ſhould not condemn them; but that they might have confidence towards God, *ver.* 20, 21. And as Chriſt ſaid to the Father; *Father, thou always heareſt me*; ſo could they ſay, *Whatſoever we aſk, we receive of him, becauſe we keep his commandments, and do thoſe things that are pleaſing in his ſight*, ver. 22. even as Chriſt had ſaid; *He that ſent me is with me*, &c. *for I do always thoſe things that pleaſe him*, John viii. 29. Yea, theſe little children, having received the anointing, were able to try ſpirits, and had tried and overcome them (notwithſtanding the ſubtilty and ſtrength of all their deceits), becauſe that light, life, Spirit, and power which dwelt within them, was greater than that which was in the world, *chap.* iv. 1, 4. And can the leſs overcome the greater, the greater keeping to its ſtrength? Nay, nay: Theſe that are of the love, and dwell in the love, are (by the power and virtue of the love) kept out of all the ſnares and devices of the enmity; for the enmity cannot enter the love, nor the ſoul that abides in the love; but only him that departs out of it. Here is a munition of rocks, here is ſafety indeed; let him that hath an ear hear, and let him that hath a ſpiritual eye read and conſider. What ſhould be ſaid more of them? They were in the love which keeps the commandments of the birth to which the victory is given, and in the faith which gives the victory, *chap.* v. 3, 4. Yea, did they not ſo keep themſelves, as that the wicked one could not touch them? *ver.* 18. How could he, when they had overcome him, and abode in that which overcame him? Satan falls like a flaſh of lightening before the power of truth, before the living faith; the faith which is from, and ſtands in, the power. And if the Devil would fly from thoſe that reſiſted him, how much more would he fly from thoſe that had overcome him, and ſtood armed with that armour which is painful and dreadful to him?

Again, the apoſtle that writeth to the Hebrews, ſpeaketh of their work and labour of love (which advanceth the ſoul apace towards the kingdom), and of their patient enduring the trials, perſecutions, afflictions, and croſſes (through which perfection is attained, *James* i. 4.) *Heb.* vi. 10. and *chap.* x. 32, 33. Yea, he ſpeaketh expreſly concerning them, that they were come to Mount Sion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerulem, and to an innumerable company of angels; to the general aſſembly and church of the firſt-born which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect, and to Jeſus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of ſprinkling, *chap.* xii. 22, 23, 24. and that they had received, or were receiving, a kingdom which could not be moved, *ver.* 28.

There is another place in my heart to mention, which ſpeaks great glory and an high ſtate, in the ſenſe of my ſpirit, attributing glory and dominion to Chriſt for his loving them, and waſhing them from their ſins in his own blood, and making them kings and prieſts unto God and his Father,

Rev.

Rev. i. 5, 6. What is he who is both a king and prieſt to God? Surely he is waſhed, ſurely he is cloathed with the prieſt's raiment, ſurely he is in the dominion and purity of life, who reigns and offers up therein holy ſacrifices to the Father.

Thus far have inſtances been given in reference to the general ſtate. Now it is alſo in my heart to give ſome inſtances in particular churches, wherein teſtimony is given to the freſhneſs of life in them, and of their precious ſtate therein.

Firſt, I ſhall inſtance in that church at *Jeruſalem:* In what a beauteous glory and luſtre did they ſpring forth! *Acts* ii. 41. to the end. Conſider the place well, and tell me, if this was not the beginning of the ſpiritual and heavenly *Jeruſalem*; if the glory of it did not deſcend upon this new-gathered people and converts? So likewiſe ſee *chap.* iv. 31, *&c.*

The church at *Rome*, the apoſtle Paul ſays, were beloved of God; and that their faith was ſpoken of throughout the whole world, *Rom.* i. 7, 8. Now what a glorious precious ſtate was this! For by faith is water drawn out of the wells of ſalvation: And how much might they draw, who abounded in faith! True faith ſprings from the power of life, and it brings the power of life into the ſoul in which it ſprings, according to the degree and growth of it. He that is beloved of God, and abounds in faith towards him; what glory, what life, what virtue, what power can he want?

The ſame apoſtle, writing to the church at *Philippi*, ſaith, he did *thank God, upon every remembrance of them; making requeſt for them with joy always, in every prayer of his for them all, for their fellowſhip in the goſpel* (which is power and life to them that have fellowſhip therein) *from the firſt day until now*, Phil. i. 3, 4, 5. And he calls them *dearly beloved and longed-for, his joy and crown*, chap. iv. 1.

So writing to the ſaints and faithful brethren at Coloſſus, he gives *thanks for their faith, and their love to all the ſaints*, chap. i. 3, 4. And ſaith further concerning them, *that the word of the truth of the goſpel had brought forth fruit in them, ſince the day they heard and knew the grace of God in truth*, ver. 5, 6. To what then were they grown? Surely very far into the myſtery of life in Chriſt; in whom they had been circumciſed and baptized, and were complete, abiding in him, and drinking in of the life, virtue, and power which floweth from him.

Likewiſe he writes to the church of the Theſſalonians, as being *in God the Father, and in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 Theſſ. i. 1. Ah! how excellent and glorious was the ſtate and condition of Chriſt, to be in the Father! How glorious is the ſtate of that church, which is both in Chriſt and in the Father! He ſpeaks alſo of their work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope, *verſe* 3. Yea, he writes to them again as ſuch, 2 *Epheſ.* i. 1. Surely they did abide in the vine; they did dwell in the name and power into which they were gathered; and ſo did feel the dews from above, and the ſprings from beneath; ſo that their faith did grow exceedingly, and

their

their love abound; and the apoſtles did find cauſe of glorying in them, in the churches of God, for their patience and faith in all their perſecutions and tribulations that they endured, *ver.* 3, 4.

Writing alſo to the Epheſians, he giveth an high expreſſion of the goodneſs of God to his people in thoſe days, and of the bleſſedneſs of their eſtate, in that God had bleſſed them *with all ſpiritual bleſſings, in heavenly places in Chriſt*, chap. i. 3. That is hard to be underſtood; yet this may be ſenſibly ſaid: In the heavenly places in Chriſt, the ſpiritual bleſſings are received; and they that are raiſed together with him, and live in and with him, do alſo ſit with him in the heavenly places in him, even in the manſions which he hath prepared, and is preparing; for he raiſeth the ſoul higher and higher, from glory to glory, at his pleaſure. The apoſtle alſo ſaith, that they were *fellow-citizens with the ſaints, and of the houſehold of God*; and were *built together in Chriſt, for an habitation of God, through the Spirit*, chap. ii. 19. 22.

So the church of Smyrna; Chriſt owneth her works, and tribulations, and poverty, and pronounceth her rich, *Rev.* ii. 8. Chriſt knoweth how to value things.

And the church of Philadelphia was in a very precious ſtate indeed; Chriſt owning her works, and having ſet before her an open door, which no man could ſhut; and promiſing to make thoſe who made a profeſſion of the truth (of being Jews) but were not in it, to come and worſhip before her feet, and to know that he had loved her; as alſo that he would keep her in the hour of temptation, becauſe ſhe had kept the word of his patience, *Rev.* iii. 8, *&c.* Thus it is manifeſt that the church in general, and many churches in particular, was once in a pure, freſh, living, powerful glorious ſtate.

II. Of the Church in its declining and falling Eſtate.

BUT all the churches were not thus; nor did thoſe who were thus always continue thus: but there was a declining and falling from this glorious eſtate by degrees, even from the light, brightneſs, purity and power of the day, into the darkneſs and corruption of the night again.

And thus the apoſtaſy came in; to wit, by not keeping to the anointing, by not abiding in that Spirit, life, and power whereinto they were gathered; by not keeping ſingly to the voice of the Shepherd. For then another ear got up in them, and that itched after new and ſtrange things; not being contented with the ſimplicity of truth which is in Chriſt, with the plain heavenly bread. For truth is a naked ſimple thing to look at; not anſwering man's wiſdom at firſt, nor ever afterwards: but in the croſs to that its power

is

is felt, and its beauty ſeen. But if the wiſdom of man get up from under the croſs, if it be not ſtill kept down by that, it will preſently be judging the wiſdom of God and the plain way of truth fooliſhneſs, and be liſtening after ſomewhat elſe.

Thus the church of Corinth, who did abound in ſpiritual gifts, yet were apt to run out, and be lifted up above their meaſures, and think they reigned as kings, without (if not beyond) the apoſtles; and ſo came into danger of hearkening to falſe ſpirits and miniſters of unrighteouſneſs, 1 *Cor.* iv. 8, *&c.* 2 *Cor.* x. xi.

And the churches of Galatia, which began well, and very zealouſly, even ſo as they could have plucked out their eyes for Paul's ſake; yet were afterwards ſo far bewitched and prevailed upon, that the apoſtle profeſſed he ſtood in doubt of them, and was afraid leſt he had beſtowed upon them labour in vain, *Gal.* iv. 11. 20.

When the enemy could not prevail in open battle, by manifeſt afflictions, oppoſitions, perſecutions, &c. then he tries by deceit, getting into the form, to ſee what he can do there, how he can pleaſe and ſatisfy men therewith, and ſo work them from that power which redeems. And thoſe that do not eye the power, keep to the power, walk in the power, and judge by the power, to be ſure he catcheth this way. *The falſe prophets*, ſaith Chriſt, *which come in ſheep's cloathing* (with the good words, as miniſters of righteouſneſs; but not with the living powerful fruits of righteouſneſs) come with ſo ſubtil an appearance, as, if it were poſſible, they would deceive the very elect: but God keepeth that eye in his elect open, which cannot be deceived; but all elſe are. They that depart from the power, they that err from the faith, they that are in the high-mindedneſs and conceitedneſs, out of the fear, they eaſily hearken to ſeducing ſpirits, and drink off their poiſon. And Peter plainly foreſaw that theſe would be many, 2 *Pet.* ii. 1, 2.

See alſo what complaint Paul makes to Timothy, about the declining of many from the truth; he exhorts him to *keep faith and a good conſcience; which ſome having put away, concerning faith have made ſhipwreck; of whom is* Hymeneus *and* Alexander, 1 *Tim.* i. 19, 20.

Again he ſpeaks of ſome that were *already turned aſide after Satan*, chap. v. 15. And of ſome that had *erred from the faith, and pierced themſelves through with many ſorrows*, chap. vi. 10. Again: *All they which are in* Aſia *be turned away from me*, 2 *Tim.* i. 15. Likewiſe he ſpeaks of ſome, who *would increaſe unto more ungodlineſs*, and whoſe word *will eat as doth a canker*, chap. ii. 16, 17. and that *evil men and ſeducers ſhall wax worſe and worſe, deceiving and being deceived*, chap. iii. 13. Yea, *the time will come*, ſaith he, *when they will not endure ſound doctrine*, chap. iv. 3. Demas *hath forſaken me, having loved the preſent world*, verſe 10. Alexander *the copperſmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works*, verſe 14. *At my firſt anſwer, no man ſtood with me, but all men forſook me*, verſe 16. Surely

love was grown very cold, iniquity likely to abound, and the apostasy from the truth to increase.

And among the churches of *Asia*, how many of them were warping? *Ephesus*, though she had much good remaining in her, yet she had left her first love, and was fallen from her first state and works, *Rev.* ii. 4, 5. *Pergamus* also had them which held the doctrine of the *Nicholaitans*; which thing Christ hated, *verse* 15. *Thyatira*, she likewise suffered the woman *Jezabel*, which called herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce God's servants, *verse* 20. (Now this she ought not to have done, the churches having the Spirit, the holy anointing, to try spirits and prophets by; yea to try Apostles; which will faithfully discover which are truly such, and which are not, as *verse* 2.) *Sardis* had a name that she lived, but was generally dead; there being but a few names left in *Sardis*, which had not defiled their garments, *chap.* iii. 1, 4. *Laodicea* was lukewarm; neither cold nor hot; in the profession, in the form and appearance of truth; but without zeal, without life, without power, *verse* 15. Now being in this state (having the form and appearance of all) she judged herself rich, and increased with goods, and to have need of nothing, *verse.* 17. This indeed is a pleasant state in man's eye, but very loathsome to God, *verse* 16. This church seemed to have all, but indeed had lost all, and wanted the gold, the raiment, and the eye-salve; and so was wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked, *ver.* 17. 18.

In this declining state some fell from the doctrine of truth, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils, 1 *Tim.* iv. 1. Some from the fellowship and worship; it being the manner of some to forsake the assembling themselves together, *Heb.* x. 25; which the church, when first gathered, was very diligent in, *Acts* ii. 42. 46. Some hold the form of knowledge and profession, but fell from the life and power, 2 *Tim.* iii. 5. Yea many ways did the wolfish false spirits drive and scatter from the flock, as they could get entrance into mens minds.

Object. *But, how could the church decline thus in the Apostles days; the Spirit of God being so powerful in the Apostles, and being also so generally then bestowed upon believers? as* Gal. iv. 6.

Answ. It is true, they had great advantages of standing, by reason of the presence and power of the Spirit with them. But yet withal, the Spirit of the Lord is tender, jealous, and might be grieved and provoked by neglects (his warnings being slighted, and his motions quenched) and so might draw back from such, as either received not the truth in the love of it, or grew cold and careless afterwards; and then the spirit of darkness and deceit thereby had advantage to blind them, gain upon them, and enter into that part of them, which the Spirit of the Lord had before recovered and possessed. Now the enemy having got entrance, prevails and captivates more and more, unless the Lord in tender love and mercy visit it again, lifting up a standard for the soul, and so drawing it back by degrees into his light and power again.

Besides,

Beſides, it is eaſy to decline (eaſy for any ſoul, eaſy for any church); but there is need of much care, fear, faith, obedience, watchfulneſs to the Lord, and againſt the enemy, &c. to preſerve and keep the eſtate of an heart, or the eſtate of a church, chaſte and pure. *Ye are kept by the power of God, through faith unto ſalvation.* Can any thing preſerve a ſoul, or church, but God's power? And doth God preſerve any ſoul, or church, but in the way he hath appointed? A church is like a garden; needs digging, dreſſing, watering and ſun-ſhine, to cauſe it to thrive and flouriſh. Do not weeds eaſily ſpring up in a garden? yea, ranker weeds than in common ground; which ſpread apace and over-run it faſter, if it be not looked to and kept by the Gardener? Read the figure, and underſtand. Are not ſpiritual weeds as corrupt and ſpreading as the outward? Are they not like leaven; have they not a poiſonous, infecting nature in them? *Know ye not*, ſaith the apoſtle, *that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump*? 1 Cor. v. 6. If but one root of bitterneſs ſpring up in a church, it may defile many, and trouble the whole, *Heb.* xii. 15. And as one corrupted perſon, ſo alſo one corrupted church, may infect and poiſon many more. Yea, was it not thus in the apoſtaſy? When it once got head, did it not break in and overflow apace?

III. Of the declined and fallen State of the Church.

WHEN antichriſt (or that ſpirit which wrought againſt that ſpiritual appearance of Chriſt, and power of his truth) was revealed, and got into the temple, appearing and being acknowledged there as God, then (without controverſy) was the declined ſtate. He had been a long while working under-ground by his agents and miniſters, appearing as miniſters of righteouſneſs, in a form thereof, out of, and againſt the power; but the power (in the true apoſtles and miniſters) ſtood in his way, and wrought againſt him, ſo as he could not for a long time get up. Yet he prevailed more and more in the corrupt part in men, till at length he drew many (of the very ſtars from heaven) after him; and then fighting an open battle, gets rid of the true church, vomits out a flood after her (as if ſhe were an harlot, and not worthy the name of Chriſt's ſpouſe) and ſo gets into the temple, and is owned there (as Chriſt) in the ſtead of Chriſt.

Object. *Will any man own antichriſt, worſhip antichriſt, and acknowledge antichriſt (inſtead of Chriſt) to be God?*

Anſw. Read 2 *Theſſ.* ii. 4. and ſee if it be not ſo. See if he do not get into the temple, and ſit ruling and governing in the temple (that which was once ſo, and ought ſtill to be ſo) till the very coming and appearing of Chriſt in his Spirit and brightneſs, *ver.* 8.

Queſt. *But how could this poſſibly ever be, or how can it be?*

Anſw. He doth not directly get up, nor ſhew himſelf directly as he is; but in a myſtery of deceit. He doth not appear as antichriſt (crying up all manner of filthineſs, abomination, and contrariety to Chriſt, in direct words), but as Chriſt, preaching righteouſneſs, crying up ſcriptures, ordinances, church-miniſtry, holineſs, *&c.* Yet, for all theſe words and fair pretences, he is not the true ſpirit, but the falſe, the antichriſtian; and thoſe that receive him, or bow to him in any of theſe, they bow not to Chriſt, but to him. He hath a mark, he hath a name, he hath a worſhip, he hath a church, he hath a miniſtry, he hath laws and ordinances of worſhip; which whoſoever receives, worſhips not the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, but that ſpirit which under a diſguiſe thus appeareth, which hath horns as it were of a lamb, or like a lamb; but not the Lamb's horns, nor the Lamb's nature, nor the Lamb's Spirit, nor the Lamb's meekneſs; but the old nature of the dragon, who gives him both ſubtilty and power.

Now mark: when Chriſt brought forth his church, it was a pure, holy, ſpiritual building, built up of renewed ſpirits; ſuch as were new-born, ſuch as were waſhed, ſuch as were ſanctified, ſuch as were juſtified in the name of the Lord Jeſus, and by the Spirit of our God. Chriſt's church was Sion, even the holy ſeed, built upon the holy hill of God, into an holy city or temple. But antichriſt's church is Babylon, which hath the wiſdom and order of man in it, ſuch as man's eye judgeth right, but is fooliſhneſs and confuſion in the eye of God. Now the Lord hath moſt terrible plagues to pour out upon this antichriſt, and upon his Babylon; yea, upon every one that hath his mark or name, or that which amounts to his name, though it be not directly ſo called. Therefore, oh! fear the Lord God! and ye that love the peace of your ſouls, pray to be delivered from that which his wrath is to; for the dregs of the cup of trembling are to be poured out on antichriſt inward and outward, and on Babylon inward and outward. Let him that readeth underſtand the tender warnings, which are given forth in the tender nature and Spirit of the Lord; for the day of mercy ſpreads apace, and the night of anguiſh and tribulation haſtens.

The true church of Chriſt was gathered by his Spirit into his name and power, and was a ſpiritual building, or building of ſpirits therein; wherein the Spirit of the Lord was as preſent ſpiritually, as ever he appeared in the outward temple or ark outwardly. And the miniſters of the New Teſtament were made by the Spirit, and ſent forth by the Spirit, and in the power. *Stephen* (though but a deacon) *was full of faith, and of the Holy Ghoſt*; and if any man taught in the church, he was to *ſpeak as an oracle of God.* Fleſh is to be ſilent there, and only the Spirit's voice to be heard in the ſpiritual building. But now in the apoſtaſy, the miniſters there are as wells without water, clouds without rain, who have only the ſhew of the thing after the fleſh, but not the truth of the thing after the Spirit; and ſo being not in the thing, nor in the Spirit, they deſpiſe the dominion, and

ſpeak

ſpeak evil of the dignities which are of the Spirit, and for advantage ſake cry up the dominions and dignities which are of the earth.

In the apoſtles days the miniſters of the church were not of man, nor ſet over the flock by man; but made by God, and ſet over the flock as overſeers by him, *Acts* xx. 28. For the ſame Lord who gave apoſtles, prophets, and evangeliſts, gave alſo paſtors and teachers, *Epheſ.* iv. 11. And though the hands of the Preſbytery were laid on thoſe that were made miniſters; yet that was not done ſuddenly, or lightly, but by the guidance of God's Spirit; and there went a gift and power of the Spirit along with it, according as Paul ſaid to Timothy, *Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the Preſbytery*, 1 Tim. iv. 14. But now, in the declined fallen eſtate, there is no ſuch thing; but an empty form, a form of worſhip, a form of godlineſs, a form of miniſtry, a form of doctrine, a form of diſcipline; without the life, without the Spirit, without the power, from which the true form came, and whereby alone it could be preſerved.

This declined ſtate hath been a very ſink of iniquity, wherein the Chriſtian love hath not only grown cold, but hath been quite dead, and plucked up by the very roots; yea, wherein all that filthineſs which was ſprouting forth and getting up in the declining ſtate had reigned in power, defiling the very name of Chriſtanity, oppreſſing the good ſeed, and corrupting the earth. Read 2 *Tim.* iii. 2, *&c.* and ſee what a generation of Chriſtian profeſſors were to grow up (and did grow up) in the time of the apoſtaſy.

IV. Of the State of the Church in its Recovery; or what State the Church ſhall be in after it is recovered out of the Apoſtaſy.

THE ſtate of the church *after* the apoſtaſy, is to be like the ſtate it was in *before* the apoſtaſy (for purity, power, brightneſs, and glory, *&c.*); yea, ſhall it not be more glorious, after its coming through all this darkneſs, and ſhining over it, than it was before? The New-Jeruſalem is to come down from God out of heaven; the bride is to be cloathed and adorned as the Lamb's wife, meet for the delight of her huſband. The power and Spirit of the Lord, which cleanſeth away all this rubbiſh, will make his truth ſhine, his church ſhine, his ſuffering lambs (that come out of the great tribulation) ſhine more than ever before. The Lord God Omnipotent will take his great power unto him to reign, and will reign according to his power in the hearts of his children, and over the earth. He will break that which ſtands in his way with a rod of iron; and he will embrace and exalt

exalt that which boweth to and kiſſeth the ſcepter of his Son, who is to appear upon the holy hill of Sion: and the Law is to go forth out of Sion, and the Word of the Lord from Jeruſalem; the power whereof ſhall break down the power of iniquity, and bring up the ſuffering ſeed into the dominion and glory of life.

In this reſtored eſtate antichriſt ſhall be worſhipped no more, nor the beaſt, nor the dragon, who gave his power to the beaſt; but the Lord God ſhall be worſhipped and magnified over all. It ſhall be ſaid no more, *Who can make war with the Beaſt? who the Lamb hath overcome him*; But, *Who is like to thee, O Lord, O king of ſaints, who haſt taken to thee thy great power, and haſt reigned, and doſt reign; who haſt brought down this lofty city, and trod it under the feet of the poor, and made the ſteps of the needy to paſs over it; who haſt made it an heap (the city fenced by all the might, wiſdom, and power of man) a ruinous heap, a place no more for thy dear children to be captived in and oppreſſed; but an habitation of dragons, and a cage of every unclean and noiſome bird for ever?—Who ſhall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? For thou only art holy; for all nations ſhall come and worſhip before thee; for thy judgments are made manifeſt*, Rev. xv. 4. Thou haſt judged down Babylon, which was exalted; thou haſt pitied Sion, which lay in the duſt for many ages and generations, and haſt raiſed up thine holy building again, and wilt give to thy children to be cloathed, and to walk before thee in pure white linen (which is the righteous nature and Spirit of thy Son) for evermore; and the darkneſs ſhall never come over them again, but the beaſt, dragon, and falſe prophet ſhall be caſt into, and bound down in the lake; and the ſprings of life ſhall open, and whoſoever will may come freely, and drink of the water of life. And the people in heaven ſhall ſay, *Hallelujah! ſalvation, and glory, and honour, and power unto the Lord our God.*

And the voice of great multitudes, and the voice of many waters, and the voice of mighty thunders, ſhall ſay *Hallelujah!* and ſhall be glad, and rejoice, and ſhall give honour to the Lord, for the bride's marriage with the Lamb, and for her rich adorning for her bridegroom. Yea, the earth ſhall rejoice, and the multitudes of the iſles be glad. Why ſo? Becauſe the Lord reigns, who is tender even of the earth, and hates the oppreſſing not only of his ſeed, but alſo of his creatures: for he will reign and judge in righteouſneſs, and tenderneſs, and much mercy, to all that is of him; and none ſhall feel his judgment and ſeverity but that which is contrary to him, and joineth to his enemy. For the Lord will make war with that ſpirit, which is contrary to his life and nature, for ever and ever. And he that joineth to that ſpirit, ſhall find woe, miſery, and tribulation (tribulation and anguiſh ſhall light upon every ſoul that continues in the evil-doing); but he that comes from under that ſpirit by the leadings of God's Spirit, bowing to and kiſſing the Son, ſhall taſte of the Father's love to the Son, and partake of the mercy, peace, and reconciliation which is treaſured up in him. *Amen.*

The

THE WAY of SALVATION in the Covenant of LIFE OPENED:

And ſome Stumbling-blocks removed out of the Way of the Simple-hearted.

THERE are many whom the Lord hath raiſed up, in this day of the manifeſtation of his power, and of his everlaſting love, to bear witneſs to his truth; among whom I alſo (who was an outcaſt, and miſerable beyond expreſſion) have obtained mercy to partake of the virtue, life, and power of his precious truth (which redeems from the bondage of ſin and iniquity); and am alſo many times moved by the Lord to teſtify of that which he hath made known unto me, and given me to experience.

This brief touch ſprang in me by way of preface. Now to the thing itſelf.

The Father, in whom is the whole virtue and power of redemption, ſent his Son to gather the ſcattered and loſt ſheep of the houſe of Iſrael; and not only ſo, but he gave him alſo for a light to the Gentiles, that he might be his ſalvation to the ends of the earth; and ſending him, he ſent his Spirit and power with him: for that which is begotten by the Father is not able to do the work, unleſs anointed and aſſiſted by the Father: therefore the Father, who ſent him to preach the goſpel, anointed him, and filled him with his Spirit, that he might preach the goſpel according to that ſcripture, *Iſai* lxi. 1, 2, 3. *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, becauſe the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek; he hath ſent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening the priſon to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of our Lord, and to comfort all that mourn, &c.*

Queſt. *But how came thoſe meek, thoſe broken-hearted, thoſe captives, thoſe bound in priſon, thoſe mourners, to meet with the redemption and bleſſings which he is anointed to preach to them? Or which way do they come to receive and partake of them from him?*

Anſw. In faith. This all his outward healings did ſignify, being thus diſpenſed. (*If thou wilt believe, thou ſhalt ſee the glory of God. Thy faith hath made thee whole. O woman! great is thy faith! be it unto thee according to thy faith*). And thus all his inward healings are beſtowed upon, and received by, the ſouls, to wit, in the faith.

Queſt. *But how came they to have faith? Or how cometh any man to have faith in the redeeming power?*

Anſw. It is beſtowed upon them by God, in the ſenſe which is from him. His Word goeth forth from his mouth; there is a witneſs of him in the

ſins? Let us ſearch and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord. And the Spirit of the Lord never failed to do what was his part, towards the turning them from iniquity, towards the Lord, in that covenant.

And when they did believe, conſent, and obey, and did eat the good of the land, was it not pleaſant and delightful to him? And when they provoked him to jealouſy, and drew down judgments upon their heads, was it not irkſome and painful to him [Read *Deut.* v. 29. *Iſa.* v. *Ezek.* xx. *Jer.* xliv. 4. and chap. xxxi. 20. *Iſa.* lxiii. 7. to ver. 15.] And will God fail to do his part towards any man for the ſalvation of his ſoul, which is ſo precious, of ſo great concern, and the loſs whereof he knoweth to be ſo invaluable? No, no; the Spirit of God ſuffers, in every man upon the face of the earth, that ſins againſt him; and is grieved and wounded by their unjuſt and unrighteous converſations, from day to day, againſt the teſtimony of ſomewhat of him in them, which is contrary thereto. Now this is of a precious nature; and being ſo deſpiſed and rejected by men, can it be wondered that God doth not proceed to make it more manifeſt, and to work more in men by it? Nay, may it not rather be wondered that God doth continue to manifeſt it ſo much? What man could endure to behold a thing ſo precious in his eyes (as this is in God's) ſo continually abuſed by, and to ſuffer ſo much from, that which is ſo far beneath it, as God daily doth? Therefore, if there come a day of reckoning for this, with all men upon the face of the earth (for who hath not had a talent from God; even of the pure eternal light in him, witneſſing in his heart and conſcience againſt the darkneſs?) there will be no cauſe of wondering at it. And is not this Light and Spirit (which ſhines in all mens darkneſs in ſome meaſure, ſtirring and witneſſing againſt it, and endeavouring to perſuade and draw the mind from it) the very ſame, in nature and kind, with the Light and Spirit of the Father, which appeared in that perſon of Chriſt? And, if hearkened unto and followed, would it not bring into union and fellowſhip with him, and into a partaking of the benefit of all he did in that body? Yea, would not the Spirit reveal whatever is neceſſary to be known, to that ſoul which receives and follows it? Oh! what hath God done (in his rich and tender mercy towards all) for mankind! And how clear will he be, when he opens and manifeſts the righteouſneſs of his judgment! He will not clear himſelf after this manner; that he hath diſpoſed of them to deſtruction, according to the power and prerogative of his will; but that they have run headlong into deſtruction, againſt the light and leadings of his will and power; to which it is natural to ſave, but not to deſtroy. That is the act which is proper to another nature and ſpirit, but ſtrange to his.

Object. *But could not* God *ſave any if he would? Who can reſiſt his will or his power? Who can ſtop or reſiſt him in the work of redemption, or deſtruction?*

Anſw. God can ſo put forth his will and power, as none can reſiſt. Yea, the will and power of God (which offereth to ſave, and ſtandeth ready to ſave) will bring deſtruction upon all that ſo dally with it, as to neglect and let paſs the

the day of their viſitation: and thus none can reſiſt his will, or his power. But in the way wherein he appeareth, and hath choſen to work out Life and Salvation, Satan, and man's corrupt heart and mind, may and do often reſiſt the will and power of the Lord. Now that which reſiſteth, is not of God, but againſt him; yet it is the patience of the Lord, to ſuffer it. I find drawings in my heart from God, or I durſt not open theſe things. For I dare not hold out to men what the Lord hath given me to know and experience, but only what he giveth and chuſeth for me to hold out: and that will be life to them that receive it. But if I ſhould hold out any thing of myſelf, that would not reach to life, but only feed the wrong part in men; and ſo help to build up that, which God will again throw down, before he ſaves that ſoul which is built up with the knowledge of things after this manner.

There is ſomewhat ſprings up in my heart, which may perhaps open this thing further to the minds of ſome.

Cain was the firſt wicked man that we read of; and how tender was God towards him! even him that ſacrificed not after the Spirit, but after the fleſh, and ſlew his Brother *Abel*? Now can any man lay *Cain*'s wickedneſs either upon the Will, or upon the Decree and Counſel of God? Might he not have done well? Might he not have ſacrificed to God in the Faith, as well as his brother *Abel*? And if he had done well, and offered in the faith, had he not found forgiveneſs and acceptance with the Lord? God accepteth no man's perſon; God rejecteth no man's perſon; but there is a ſeed he hath choſen; and to gather man into this ſeed, is his delight and work; as it is the delight, nature, and work of another ſpirit to ſcatter from this ſeed.

Now in this ſeed he doth accept, and not out of it. Yea, in this ſeed ſhall all the families of the earth be bleſſed, as they are gathered into, and abide in it. And this ſeed is a word nigh in the mouth and heart, both of *Jew* and *Gentile*; which, as it is hearkened to, writes the law of the Spirit of life in the heart, either of *Jew* or *Gentile*. And as they become ſons, ſo the Spirit of the Father is poured out upon them; even the Spirit of adoption, which crieth *Abba, Father*, either in *Jew* or *Gentile*. And this is the goſpel of the kingdom, which is preached more ſparingly, or abundantly, by the mouth of the ſeed, as the Lord pleaſeth.

For God's power, wiſdom, mercy, love, goodneſs, patience, long-ſuffering, *&c.* is his own; and he may ſow of it, or exerciſe it, more ſparingly or abundantly, as he pleaſeth. Yea, he doth exerciſe it more abundantly towards the veſſels of mercy; ſo that the cauſe of their ſalvation doth not ſo much ariſe from their embracing of mercy, as from God's exerciſing of it. He viſiteth nations as he pleaſeth, and perſons in nations as he pleaſeth; and who may ſay unto him, *What doſt thou? Why art thou ſo good and kind here?* Or, *Why art thou ſo ſharp and ſevere there?* But ſtill in the way, and according to the path, of the covenant, doth the Lord walk, in and towards all: and his mercy endureth for ever towards the ſeed of the righteous, and his juſtice and indignation for ever towards the ſeed of the evil-doer: and

man (ſimply conſidered) is not either of theſe; but as he is gathered into, and brought forth in, the root and ſpirit of either of theſe. Now every man hath a day for the life of his ſoul; and power and mercy is near him, to help him to travel from death to life. Happy is he, who is taught of God to make uſe of it.

And let not men puzzle themſelves about the myſtery of *Election* and *Reprobation*; which cannot be underſtood by ſuch as are out of the thing wherein it is made manifeſt. Only thus, at preſent: *Pharaoh* and *Iſrael*, *Eſau* and *Jacob*, *Iſhmael* and *Iſaac*, &c. were parables, ſignifying ſomewhat inward. What was *Pharaoh?* Was he not the oppreſſor of God's *Iſrael?* What was *Eſau?* Was he not the firſt birth, which ſold the birth-right and inheritance? What was *Iſhmael?* Was he not the birth after the fleſh? Theſe are rejected, and caſt off by God for ever; and the ſpiritual *Iſrael*, the ſpiritual *Jacob*, the ſpiritual *Iſaac*, are accepted.

Shall I ſpeak out this thing yet more plain? Why thus then: It is not the creature which is rejected by its Maker; but ſomewhat in the creature, and the creature in that. Nor is it the creature (ſimply) which is elected; but ſomewhat in the creature, and the creature in that. And as any man comes into that, the Election is begun in him: and as any man abides in that, he abides in the Election: and as that is made ſure to any man, his Calling and Election is made ſure to him. But as any man departs from that, he departs from the Election into the Reprobation: and going on in that into the full impenitency and hardneſs, he will for ever miſs of the Election, and the Reprobation, and Sealing up to Condemnation, will be made ſure to him. For God is no reſpecter of perſons; but every-where, he that receiveth his holy ſeed, and therein worketh righteouſneſs, is accepted of him. And he that receiveth the wicked ſeed, and therein worketh wickedneſs and unrighteouſneſs, is with it rejected.

Object. *But* (may the honeſt heart ſay) *this may be truth, for aught I know; but indeed I did not apprehend things to be ſo: for I thought man and his works had been wholly excluded by the covenant of grace; but this ſeems to take both him and them in upon a conſideration.*

Anſw. Man is wholly excluded the covenant of grace, as in himſelf; as he ſtands in himſelf, and in his own ability, out of the newneſs of life and ability which is of the new covenant. But he is not excluded as he is renewed, and receiveth a new being, life, virtue, and ability, in the new covenant. But here much is required of him; and whatever he thus doth, is owned, acknowledged, and accepted by God. Here the true Jew hath praiſe of God. He is commended for his faith, and for his obedience in the faith: For his loving the Lord his God with all his heart, and his neighbour as himſelf: For his waſhing his garments in the blood of the Lamb, and keeping them clean in the ſame blood, while others defile theirs: For his merciful nature and actions to Chriſt in his members, while others are rough and cruel: For his watching againſt ſnares and temptations, while others

others are running into them: For his crucifying that in himſelf, which others feed in themſelves: Yea, for his denying and turning from all ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, even of the fleſh, eyes, and pride of life; all which are not of the Father (whom he is born of, and ſeeks after) but of the ſpirit of the world, which the earthly-minded man is born of, and ſeeks to pleaſe. So that (mark) though man is excluded in his corrupt nature and ſtate, yet not the new man, not man in the regeneration. But man muſt be regenerated; and thus man muſt enter into the covenant of life; and thus man muſt abide and be found in the covenant of life, in the nature, in the righteouſneſs, in the holineſs, in the power thereof, if ever God own him.

Object. *But this ſeems to lay difference on man's act, and not wholly on the grace of God. For the grace, in itſelf, is equally powerful towards all; but it is my receiving of it, which maketh it effectual unto me; which others not receiving, it is not ſo to them.*

Anſw. The grace, in itſelf, is of its own nature every-where. This is true. And that it hath power in it every-where, and that this power is over and above ſin; this is true alſo. But yet there is a greater or leſſer proportion of it given, according to the pleaſure and good-will of the giver: and according to the meaſure of it (which is freely given) and the ſoul's growth therein, ſo is the power of it manifeſted in the heart.

Now the difference in every man is by the grace. Not of himſelf: for he can do nothing that is good, as of himſelf: but only by the grace; which is alone able to work that which is good in him, and to cauſe him to work in it. Yet thus it is: as the grace reacheth to him, draweth him, quickening and cauſing him, in the virtue, life, and obedience of the grace, to anſwer the grace; ſo doth the work thereof go on in him. And there is matter of condemnation to him, who doth not anſwer the grace; and there is matter of juſtification and praiſe to him, who doth anſwer the grace. Yet this whole ability ariſing not from himſelf, but from the grace; the acknowledgment of what is effected thereby, doth of right and due belong to the grace. And therefore they who are juſtified, ſanctified, and crowned by the grace, do of right and due caſt their crowns at the feet of the Lamb, at the throne of grace; giving honour and glory to him who is worthy, and to his grace which hath wrought all in them.

Now if any man would know this thing groundedly and certainly, let him not run into diſputes of the mind and brain, but come to heart-experience. Haſt thou ever found the work of God's grace in thy heart? Haſt thou found thy heart, at any time, believe and obey, in and thro' the ſtrength of the grace? Haſt thou found thy heart at another time negligent of, or rebellious againſt, the grace? When thou wert rebellious, wert not thou condemned, and that juſtly too? When thou didſt believe and obey, to whom did the honour thereof belong? to thee, or to the grace? Canſt thou anſwer this? Why, as it is in thyſelf, between thee when obeying and diſobeying;

obeying; the ſame is the ſtate of the caſe between godly and wicked men. There was a difference between thee when thou obeyedſt the grace, and when thou diſobeyedſt it: ſo is there between the unregenerate and regenerate. When thou obeyedſt not, that which called for obedience condemned thee; ſo it doth them. When thou obeyedſt, thou diſt ſenſibly feel the praiſe was not thine, but belonged to the grace which wrought in thee; ſo is it alſo in the regenerate, in whom the Lord works by his grace, and who work out their ſalvation through him, and make their calling and election ſure in him. Leave brain-knowledge, and come to true ſenſe (where the myſteries of God are made manifeſt) and this will ſoon be eaſy and clear to thee. But theſe things were never intended by God to be found out by man's diſputing wiſdom: for God (who giveth the knowledge) hideth them from that part, and giveth them to the innocent ſimple birth of his own Spirit.

Object. *But when the Father draweth, can any man reſiſt or hold off? Doth not the power of the Lord make any man willing, whom he exerciſeth his power towards? And is it not thereupon ſaid, "Thy people ſhall be willing in the day "of thy power?"*

Anſw. The power of the Lord is great, and hath dominion over all evil ſpirits that can tempt, and over all the corruptions, backſlidings, and withdrawings of the heart. But the Father doth not ſave man by ſuch an abſolute act of his power (for then there would need no more to be done, but an immediate tranſlating of a man from death to life; which if the Lord pleaſe to do, nothing could come between to hinder); but the power of the Lord works in and according to the way that he hath appointed. And in this way the Devil hath liberty and power to tempt from, oppoſe and reſiſt the work of God: and they that hearken to him, and enter into the temptation and ſnare which he lays, let his power in upon them, and withdraw from the virtue, operation, and ſtrength of the power of God. Yet for all this, the Lord not only begins his work, but alſo carries it on in the day of his power; giving not only to will, but alſo to do what is right and pleaſing in his eyes: but ſtill in and according to his own way and covenant.

Object. *And ſo whereas ſome men ſay, If God put forth his power to ſave, and the Devil interrupt and ſtop his work; then it ſeems that the Devil is ſtronger than God. Is the Devil ſtronger than God, ſay they? If he be not, how can he reſiſt and withſtand him in the work of his power?*

Anſw. Nay; the Devil is not ſtronger than God; though he is very ſtrong. But if the heart let in the enemy, grieve the Spirit, beat back his power in the way wherein it hath appointed to work, the Devil may be more prevalent with him than the power of God. But in thoſe that believe, and become obedient and ſubject to the power of God, his power is far ſtronger in them to defend and carry on his work, than the power of the Devil is to work againſt and hinder it.

There

There are objections alſo relating to Free-will, and Falling from Grace; which ſtick much in the ſpirits of many, and they cannot get over them; but it hath pleaſed the Lord to clear up theſe things to us, and to ſatisfy our hearts concerning them, ſo that with us there is no difficulty nor doubt about them.

As touching Free-will: We know, from God, that man in his fallen eſtate is ſpiritually dead, and hath no free-will to good; but his underſtanding and will are both darkened and captivated by the enemy. But in Chriſt there is freedom, and in his word there is power and life: and that reaching to the heart, looſeneth the bands of the enemy, and begetteth not only a freedom of mind towards good, but an inclination, deſires, and breathings after it. Thus the Father draws; and thus the ſoul (feeling the drawing) anſwers in ſome meaſure: and the ſoul, thus coming, is welcomed by Chriſt, and accepted of the Father. But for all this, the enemy will tempt this ſoul; and the ſoul may hearken to, let in, and enter into the temptation, and ſo draw back from the plough to which it put its hand. *Now if any man draw back, my ſoul ſhall have no pleaſure in him*, ſaith the Lord. *And he that putteth his hand to the plough, and looketh back, is not fit for the kingdom of heaven.*

So concerning Falling away; The Lord ſhews us what it is that is apt to fall, and what cannot fall. Chriſt cannot fall; and that which is gathered into him, ſtands and abides in him (and ſo partakes of his preſervation) cannot fall. There is no breaking in upon that power, which preſerves in the way that it hath appointed: but there is a running and periſhing out of the way. Out of the limits of the covenant, the preſervation and power of the covenant is not witneſſed. But in coming to Chriſt in the drawings of the Father, in the ſenſe and faith which he begets, and abiding with him that drew, in the ſenſe and faith which he daily and freſhly begets anew (for he reneweth covenant and mercy daily, and keepeth covenant and mercy for ever) in this is the power felt, the preſervation felt; in this the Father's hand encompaſſeth the ſoul, which none can pluck it out of. Now he that feels and experiences theſe things every day, that ſees and feels daily how he can fall, and how he cannot fall; how he meets with the preſervation, and how he miſſes of the preſervation; how he abides in the pure power (which is the limits of this holy covenant) and how he wanders out of this power, into the limits of another covenant, ſpirit, and power; he knows theſe things, how they are indeed; whereas other men (who are not exerciſed in the thing) do but gueſs at them; ſtriving to comprehend them in that part which God hath ſhut out of them.

Now mind a Parable, with which I ſhall conclude this:

Tho' the natural and outwardly-viſible Sun be riſen ever ſo high upon the earth, yet he that is naturally blind cannot ſee it, nor partake of the light thereof,

thereof. So alſo, though the ſpiritual Sun, the Sun of righteouſneſs, the Sun of the inward world, be riſen ever ſo high, and appear brightly in ever ſo many clouds; yet they that are ſpiritually blind cannot diſcern it, nor reap the benefits of its light, nor partake of the healing which is under his wings.

Some QUERIES CONCERNING THE NEW COVENANT.

Query 1. WHAT is the covenant of hell and death, which muſt of neceſſity be broken, before a ſoul can be gathered into the covenant of life?

Query 2. What is the covenant of life and peace, into which God gathers the ſoul?

Query 3. How doth God gather? By a meer act of power, which none can reſiſt? or in a way wherein his power (though much reſiſted) ſhall prevail for the ſalvation of thoſe, who are faithful in the covenant; who come to Chriſt, abide in Chriſt, reſiſt and fight (in Chriſt) againſt all that is contrary to his nature and Spirit, and overcome through him?

Query 4. Are there any terms in this covenant? Or can there be any terms in this covenant, ſuitable to the nature of the covenant? Is believing in the power, as abſolutely required in this covenant, as obedience to the law was under the covenant of the law?

Query 5. If faith in the power, and obedience to the power that redeems, be required as terms in the new covenant; yet if they be not required of the creature in its own capacity and ability, but as ſtrengthened and enabled by the virtue, life and power of the covenant, are they not free terms, noble terms, worthy and becoming a free covenant?

Query 6. Is not this the goſpel, or new covenant, That whoſoever believeth, and receiveth the baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt and fire (ſuffering in the fleſh, and having his ſins and corruptions purged away by the ſpirit of judgment, and by the ſpirit of burning, and ſo walketh no longer after the fleſh, but after the ſpirit) I ſay, is not this the goſpel, or new covenant, that he that thus believeth, and is thus baptized, ſhall not be condemned with the world, but juſtified and ſaved by that Spirit and power which cleanſeth him?

Query

Query 7. Doth God write his laws in mens hearts, or put his fear therein, or his Spirit within them, cauſing them to walk in his ways and ſtatutes, and to keep his judgments, *&c.* I ſay, doth God do this to men out of the faith? Is not the work of ſalvation begun in the faith, and carried on and perfected in the faith? And he that maketh ſhipwreck of faith, and of a good conſcience, can he groundedly hope to have the work of ſalvation carried on in him?

Query. 8 Doth not God beget, increaſe, and perfect the faith, which is available unto ſalvation? Is any man accepted in the faith which is of his own nature? Or is the acceptation in and through the faith which is of the Son's nature?

Query 9. May the temptations of the Devil, with a man's hearkening thereto, hinder God's begetting faith in him or no? Or if it be begotten, can they hinder the growth and increaſe of it?

Query 10. When God draws, muſt a man neceſſarily come to the Son? Or may the Devil ſo tempt, and he ſo hearken thereto, as that his coming to the Son may be hindered, notwithſtanding the Father's drawing?

Query 11. Is there not juſtification to them that receive the ſeed, to them that obey the light? And is there not condemnation to them that refuſe the ſeed, and obey not the goſpel of its ſalvation?

Query 12. Do men periſh for want of power from God? Or through their cleaving to another power, and refuſing the ſtrength of that which is over that other power; whoſe hand would help their ſouls, and bring them through and over it, did they receive it, and cleave to it in the way the Lord hath appointed?

Query 13. They that receive the power, believe in it and live; do they do it by their own ſtrength? Or in the ſtrength and virtue which flows from the power, which enlivens, draws, and makes able to follow?

Query 14. Thoſe that are weak as to the power, and in whom the enemy and corruptions are ſtrong; is the defect on God's part? or on his covenant's part? Or in the way of life, which he hath pitched upon as ſufficient to redeem and deliver fallen man by? Or is God (and his covenant and way of life) wholly clear of the defect, and reſts it wholly on them?

AN

EXHORTATION to ALL PEOPLE,

But more eſpecially to SUCH as are

DESOLATE and DISTRESSED.

NOW is the acceptable time, now is the day of ſalvation. Now is the life ariſen, and now the light ſhines, to guide out of the darkneſs and death, into the land of the living. Oh! awake, ye that ſleep in the duſt of the earth; ariſe up from among the dead, and Chriſt ſhall give you light, to walk along in the path of the living! Come to him whom the Father hath ſealed; who is life, and who giveth life freely to all that come; yea, abundantly, to thoſe that wait upon him, and walk faithfully in his covenant. Oh! therefore come into covenant with him; mind the words of his lips, which beget ſenſe, and in that ſenſe his life ſtirs, and in the ſtirrings of his life the drawings of the Father are felt. And when the Father draws, he whom-ever he draws may come; and him who comes, Chriſt will in no-wiſe caſt out, but receive into his arms, and defend by his power, againſt that which would draw or force back from him into perdition. Therefore hearken to the little movings and ſtirrings in you, after that which is eternal; for any deſire which is in truth after him, he will not quench (it is his nature to cheriſh it); but he will be a ſtrength and relief to the ſoul, againſt that which would quench and put out the breathings and pantings after him, that it might ſtill hold the ſoul in bondage and captivity. And, people, mind this (it is a true teſtimony). The door of life is now ſo opened, by him who hath the key and power, that whoever will may enter. For the power of life is ariſen, againſt the power of death and the deſtroyer of the ſoul: ſo that great, yea very great advantage is there in this day, to all that are willing to follow the leader and captain of ſalvation, out of the land of captivity. Mind but his viſits, and be faithful in the ſtrength which flows from him; and nothing ſhall hinder thy ſoul from overcoming what ſtands in thy way, to ſtop thee from attaining the eternal crown and inheritance of life.

And as for you afflicted mourners, who are ſeeking the way to Sion, bewailing the abſence of your beloved, in whoſe preſence is life and redemption, reſurrection from the dead, and victory over ſin; yea all that your hearts have deſired or can deſire: what ſhall I ſay to you? O my friends,

and

and dear brethren! May I ſpeak a little freely to you concerning the Lord Jeſus? How that he was born of the Virgin Mary, according to the fleſh, fulfilled his miniſtry and ſervice in the fleſh, and was taken up to God; and how that the ſame Lord Jeſus was afterwards born in Spirit, of the ſpiritual woman the church; even ſo born as to rule all nations with an iron rod; and yet did not come forth to rule the nations, but was taken up to God again, and hath not ſince appeared in that Spirit, power, and dominion; but only in ſuch a ſtrength of life, as might enable his witneſſes to bear witneſs to him all along the apoſtaſy, until the church ſhould come out of the wilderneſs, and the man-child appear again.

And now hear the joyful news. The apoſtaſy is ended. Mark; I do not ſay the apoſtaſy is generally ended. No, no; there are many woes, plagues, judgments, and terrible thunders to come upon perſons, and nations, before they feel it ended. But it is ended in ſome veſſels, which are upon the earth. The man of ſin, that wicked one, the ſon of perdition hath been diſcovered by the Spirit of the Lord; chaſed, conſumed, and deſtroyed by the breath of his mouth, and by the brightneſs of his appearance in ſome. Yea, the church is come out of the wilderneſs, and the man-child is come along with her; for ſhe is not come without her beloved, but leaning upon her beloved; and he is known ruling with his golden ſceptre, and with his iron rod battering down the corrupt, ſelfiſh, ſtubborn, earthly ſpirit, and raiſing up that which is meek, tender, lowly, and lay bowed down and oppreſſed.

Now as Chriſt ſaid, preaching in the days of his fleſh, *This day is this ſcripture fulfilled in your ears*, Luke iv. 21. Was it not then fulfilled outwardly among the outward Jews? Were there any ſick, or weak, or blind, or lame, or lepers, or poſſeſſed with devils, whom he was not ready to cure? And did he not go about doing good, and ſeeking them out to cure them? So may it not now be ſaid in the Spirit and power of the Lord, among the ſpiritual Jews; this day is this ſcripture fulfilled ſpiritually in your ears. Yea, what he did then outwardly, is known in ſpirit to be done among you inwardly and ſpiritually. How many that were before blind do now ſee? That were before deaf do now hear? That were formerly lame do now walk? That were very leprous are now cleanſed? That were very dead are now raiſed? That were quite dumb do now ſpeak? And the poor, the empty, the naked are now cloathed, and filled with the riches and treaſures of the everlaſting kingdom? May it not be truly ſaid, by many poor diſtreſſed hearts, that the wilderneſs and ſolitary place is now glad, becauſe that which once was parched with drought and barrenneſs, now feels the living ſprings, and the breaking forth of the pure clear river of life, the ſtreams whereof make glad the city of God, and cauſe melody in the heart to the Lord? Where is the envious, cruel, dragoniſh nature, may ſome ſay? Yea, where is the place where dragons lay? Is there not a new creation? a new heaven, a new earth; and are not all things become new

therein? Are not the old things of the night, and of the darkneſs, paſſed away, and all things become new in this day, which the Lord hath made, in the hearts which have received and been ſubject to his light?

And now what hinders, but that ye alſo ſhould lift up your heads, and ſee the coming of the Son of man in the clouds wherein he comes, and partake of the redemption, virtue, and power of his appearance? What are the clouds wherein he comes? Is his coming outward? Or are the clouds outward? Or is his coming inward and ſpiritual in ten thouſands of his ſaints? Did not Enoch ſee that he was to come ſo to judge the world? Doth he not come to be glorified in his ſaints? Are not they to judge the world? They in him, he in them? Oh! read aright; read with the Spirit, and with the underſtanding which is thereof; and then the truth of the letter will be manifeſt and ſhine to you. There is nothing ſtands in your way, but want of a ſpiritual eye to ſee his ſpiritual appearance in others (and ſo to wait for it in yourſelves), even the eye of faith, which ſees the inviſible power and glory, as the Lord openeth it and maketh manifeſt to it.

Now this I have to ſay to you, in true ſenſe and underſtanding. Come down to the Gentile's light, come down to that which God hath diſpenſed to the Gentile, as well as to the Jew; which is *the word* (or commandment) *nigh in the mouth and heart*. This hath been the loweſt of all, deſpiſed by all; and this is in the heart of God to exalt over all; for it is above all. The loweſt in its deſcent from the Father; the higheſt in its aſcent to the Father. This is the thing which man ran from, when the veil came over him; which all the ſhadows of the law were to point out and ſignify. And as man is brought again to this, life ſprings in him, and the powerful redemption of the eternal word is witneſſed by him. Yea, he that hears the voice of this, though he were ever ſo dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, ſhall feel life ſpring in him, and the covenant of life inwardly revealed, which by the pure faith and obedience is the entrance into, and the abiding in. And this is the one truth, the one pure eternal word and way to the Father, which was from the beginning, and remains the ſame unto the end. This is the door, at which all hitherto have entered into life, at which all do ſtill enter, and there is no other. Bleſſed for ever is he, who hath made it ſo manifeſt and plain in this our day; and bleſſed are they that ſee it, and enter into life at it!

A VISIT

A

VISIT of Tender and Upright LOVE

TO SUCH AS,

Among the many Profeſſions and Ways of Religion, retain any Meaſure of Sincerity of Heart, and true Deſires after the LORD.

THE main thing in religion is to receive a principle of life from God, whereby the mind may be changed, and the heart made able to underſtand the myſteries of his kingdom, and to ſee and walk in the way of life; and this is the travail of the ſouls of the righteous, that they may abide, grow up, and walk with the Lord in this principle; and that others alſo, who breathe after him, may be gathered into, and feel the virtue of, the ſame principle.

But there is one that ſtands in the way to hinder this work of the Lord, who with great ſubtilty ſtrives to keep ſouls in captivity, and to prejudice them againſt the precious living appearances of the redeeming power of the Lord.

One great way whereby he doth this is, by raiſing up in them a fear leſt they ſhould be deceived and betrayed, and inſtead of obtaining more, loſe that little of God which they have. With this was I exerciſed long; and ſtill, when life ſtirred in my heart, then this fear was raiſed in me; ſo that I durſt not in judgment cloſe with what ſecretly in ſpirit I felt to be of God, it having a true touch of his quickening, warming, convincing, enlivening virtue in it.

Now that this ſnare may be eſcaped by ſuch as breathe after the Lord, oh! let them wait, mourn, and cry to him, that he would write his pure fear in their hearts, and teach them when to fear, and how to fear, and what to fear; and in that (or as that is brought forth in them) they ſhall ſee that they have more cauſe to fear their preſent ſtate, than to fear that which, in the quickening warmth and virtue of God, comes to make a change in their preſent ſtate; yea, they ſhall then ſee how the enemy now cauſeth them to fear, where no fear is; and keepeth them from fearing, where the fear is. For what is the ground of fear now? This is the great thing that they ſhould fear, leſt they ſhould not hear the call of the Spirit of the Lord out of Babylon; out of that part of Babylon out of which they have

not

not yet travelled; and leſt they ſhould not hear and mind the call of his Spirit unto Sion, the holy mount of God, towards and unto which he leadeth his people, in this day of the revelation and manifeſtation of his glorious love and power.

Oh! therefore, my friends, ye that long after the Lord, ye that deſire to feel the power of his truth, wait for the principle of life from him to be revealed in you, and the pure fear which is therefrom, that ye may feel the Lord thereby, and therein (even in and through that principle) writing his fear, his pure fear, his holy fear, his powerfully-preſerving fear, in your hearts; that ye may know the way to him, the ſeed (which is the way) may come and join to him therein, and never depart from him. The fear of the Lord, from the principle of his life, will (without fail) effect this in you as ye receive it from the Lord; but the other fear, the fear which the enemy begets, will not do it; but will be a bar and ſore ſtop in your way, till the Lord, by his holy power, through his tender mercy, remove it from you.

And now anſwer me one queſtion uprightly, as in God's ſight, from whom it is in my heart to propound it to you.

Are you come to Sion, or are ye travelling thitherward rightly and truly? Have ye ever known any of the travellers, that ye have been acquainted with, that could in truth ſay, that they were come to Sion? The Chriſtians, in the primitive times, were come to Sion, and they were acquainted and dwelt with God and Chriſt there; and knew Jeruſalem, the heavenly building, the city of the living God. Oh! where are ye? Nay, are ye yet come out of Babylon? Do ye yet know the wilderneſs, the intricate paſſages therein, wherethrough God alone can lead the ſoul? Oh! depart ye, depart ye from your preſent ſtations (in the leadings of God's Spirit), unleſs ye can ſay, in the true unerring light, that they are your reſt, your ſouls true reſt, even the everlaſting kingdom, which the primitive Chriſtians received (and into which they found entrance), which could not be ſhaken.

And, friends, let me tell you one thing further (for my heart is at this preſent opened to you by the Lord), that as the ſoul (in its travels) comes to Sion, the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus is witneſſed, which makes free from the law of ſin and death. And then there is no more ſuch a crying out of the body of ſin as there was before; but a bleſſing of him who hath delivered, and daily doth deliver, from it: yea, the body of ſin is known and felt to be put off, and Chriſt put on in the ſtead thereof. For, my friends, there are ſeveral ſtates witneſſed by the ſoul, in its true and ſenſible travels towards the Holy Land. As for inſtance:

1. There is a ſtate of Egyptian darkneſs and bondage, in which the power of death reigns and rules in the heart, ſubjecting it to ſin and death. And here the ſoul is in the grave, and under death, captivity, and bondage, in the midſt of all its profeſſions of religion, and talk of God and Chriſt, and reading ſcriptures, and obſerving ordinances and duties, *&c.*

2. There

2. There is a wilderneſs-ſtate, wherein the ſtrength of captivity is ſomewhat broken, and the heart drawn to mind the leadings of life, and to follow after the Lord through the trials, through the preparations, through the ſeveral exerciſes which the Lord ſeeth good to exerciſe it with.

And here the mercy and goodneſs of the Lord is experienced, and the deceitfulneſs and treachery of the heart. This is the place of humiliation and breaking, wherein the ſoul daily feels how untoward and unaccuſtomed it is to the yoke, which ſhould break the ſpirit, and ſubdue it to God. Here the Lord ſhews the ſoul what its heart is, that he might humble it, and do it good in the latter end. Here the very law of God appears weak, through the ſtrength of the fleſh, which is not yet ſubdued. Now here is mourning, and groaning, and crying to the Lord night and day, both becauſe of the violence and multitude of the enemies, and becauſe of the naughtineſs, diſtruſt, and unbelief of the heart.

3. There is a ſtate of reſt, a ſtate of peace, a ſtate of life, a ſtate of power, a ſtate of grace, a ſtate of dominion, in the life, and through the power of the Lord, wherein the law of life is manifeſted in dominion in the heart over the law of ſin and death. There is an everlaſting kingdom, wherein God and Chriſt reign, in which God treads Satan down under the feet of the ſoul, and makes the ſoul a king and a prieſt in the Son of his love; and the ſoul feels it is one with, and accepted in, the beloved.

Now, friends, that ye may know this kingdom, travel faithfully towards it; feel and come into the reign of Chriſt in it; ſit down in the heavenly places in Chriſt Jeſus, and inherit ſubſtance; know the gathering to Chriſt in the name, and ſit down in the name, where the enemy cannot touch you; but feel the preſervation and powerful life and dominion of that ſeed which is over the enemy, and wherein and whereby the Lord ſcatters the enemy, bruiſing the ſerpent's head, and anointing the ſoul with the oil of gladneſs, and cloathing it with the beautiful garments of his righteouſneſs and ſalvation; and that ye may know the precious and glorious building of life in the Spirit, even of the holy houſe and city of God, where the walls are ſalvation, and the gates praiſe. For this end it is in my heart from the Lord to write theſe things unto you; and the Lord God of his mercy open the door of entrance to you into theſe things; for there is but one door of life, and there is not another; which door is Chriſt the ſeed; which ſeed is revealed within, there to break the wiſdom, ſtrength, and head of the ſerpent; and ſo far as he breaks it there, redemption and freedom is witneſſed from it, and no further.

Oh! that ye might receive an underſtanding from the Lord, and be taught by him to deny and part with the underſtanding which is not of him, that ye might ſee things (from him, and in his light) which ye have not yet ſeen; and conſider aright of that, which the enemy hitherto, by his ſubtilty, hath prejudiced you againſt.

And now as for us, who experience the truth as it is in Jeſus, and with the Lord our God in his Light, and by virtue of his life and love ſhed abroad in our hearts: I ſay, what is it to us to be judged by you in your day as perſons that deny Chriſt, deny ſcriptures, deny ordinances, deny duties, *&c.?* We are ſatisfied in our hearts as touching your judgment, knowing from the Lord what it is in you that thus judgeth of us, even the ſame thing that judged amiſs of Chriſt (in the Scribes, Phariſees, and profeſſing Jews) in the days of his fleſh. And indeed that in you can never judge aright; but is to be judged, condemned, and deſtroyed by the life and power of the Lord.

And oh! that ye knew (ſenſibly knew) what is to live, and what is to die in you, that ye might feel the riſing of your ſouls out of the grave, through the immortal ſeed of God, and the bringing of all your wiſdom and knowledge of the things of God (which ye hold, and make uſe of out of the compaſs and limits of his holy life and covenant) into death.

For, friends, let me tell you, that which hath been parted with (for the kingdom's ſake, and the righteouſneſs thereof) in ſome, was more precious than what ye hold ſo ſtifly, and ſo magnify in your own thoughts and reaſonings againſt the truth. Yea, that which was once of high eſteem, and very glorious in our eyes, is now become as droſs and dung, for the excellency of the pure living knowledge of, and fellowſhip with, Jeſus Chriſt, our Lord; and if ye had the true meaſure and balance to weigh things in, ye would acknowledge it: but the letter, and literal ordinances and duties, and apprehenſions of things out of the life, kills you, and keeps you under the veil, and from the ſight of the things which are within the veil.

Oh! that God would rend the veil in you! Oh! that God would give you the feeling of, and union with, that whereby he rends the veil! Oh! that he would humble you, and bring down the mighty from his ſeat of judgment in you, to be judged and abaſed, and exalt the meek and lowly into that which is his proper place!

Oh! that ye might feel the work of God, even the redemption of the ſoul, begun and carried on by him with power in your hearts! Then would ye know Chriſt indeed, the ſcriptures indeed, the ordinances indeed, the duties indeed, the everlaſting ſabbath, the everlaſting worſhip; even the ſubſtance of all that was ſhadowed out under the law, and ſit down under the wing of the Almighty, from whence the power, the life, the virtue, the healing, drops into the ſoul.

And now, to give a little touch at thoſe things beforementioned, which ye ſo ſtumble at, a little to help to remove them from your ſpirits, if it pleaſe the Lord.

1. We do not deny that Chriſt which died at Jeruſalem; but own him, and no other: and own what he did, his obedience to the Father always, and in all things; his ſufferings in the virtue and power of the Father, and the value of them with the Father. This the Lord our God teacheth

us

us to own, and to bleſs the name of the Lord, for him who is the captain, and worker out of our ſalvation; a meaſure of whoſe life and power we have received, and embrace in our hearts; and in this is He, the fulneſs, made manifeſt to us; and we, through this, and by this, and in this, ingrafted into him; and ſo come to partake of the ſweetneſs and fatneſs of the olive-tree. Yea, this we certainly know, that Chriſt was not only made manifeſt in that body of fleſh, but is alſo made manifeſt in our mortal fleſh, as we are gathered into his life, and his life brought forth in us. And he is not only antichriſt, that denieth Chriſt's appearance in that body of fleſh; but he that denieth him (the hope of glory) in his ſaints, his ſpiritual body. Yea, I beſeech you conſider, whether it hath been the work of antichriſt all along the apoſtaſy to deny the appearance of Chriſt in that body of fleſh, or to deny the appearance of his life and Spirit in the fleſh of his ſaints? *We know* (ſaith the apoſtle John) *that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an underſtanding to know him that is true.* How was he come? Was not he that was with them come in them? Did he not live in them, act in them, ſpeak in them? And did not they that were of God hear the voice of Chriſt, the voice of the ſhepherd in them? But they which were not of God, which were not the ſheep, could not hear the voice of Chriſt in his apoſtles and believers; could not own him come in their fleſh, though they could preach the ſame Chriſt in words, and own his coming in that body of fleſh which he had appeared in, 1 *John* iv. 6.

2. We do indeed really, heartily, ſingly, as in God's ſight, own the ſcriptures; the ſcriptures written by the prophets and holy men of God under the law; the ſcriptures written by the evangeliſts and apoſtles in the time of the goſpel; and we read them with delight and joy, and would draw no man from a right reading of them to the benefit of his ſoul; but only from giving their own judgments on them without the Spirit of God; leſt, in ſo doing, they wreſt them to their own deſtruction.

This is that which the Lord hath drawn us from, and which we know it would alſo be profitable to others to be drawn from too; to wit, from imagining and gueſſing at the meaning of ſcriptures, and interpreting them without the opening of that Spirit from which they were given forth; for they who ſo do, feed that part (with a gathered knowledge) which ſhould be famiſhed, die, and periſh, that another thing might come to live in them, and they in it.

Now to us, being taught of God, and led by him into the things and through the conditions the ſcriptures ſpeak of, the ſcriptures are very precious, the relation of things under the law precious, the inſtructions, promiſes, and comforts precious, yea, the very reproofs and denunciations of judgment to that part, nature and ſpirit which the judgments are to, precious; and it is impoſſible for any heart to conceive (who hath not the experience of the thing) how life ſprings in us; and how ſweet, pleaſant, and profitable the words of life in the writings of the holy men of

God are to our ſpirits; and in reading them we often meet with refreſhment, comfort, hope, and joy, from the working of the ſame Spirit in us, which gave forth the good words through them.

3. As touching ordinances, we own all the ordinances and appointments of God to the Jews under the law, and God's preſence with them, walking with the Lord, and worſhipping him in the faith according thereto. Yea, what if I ſhould ſay, that we know and are exerciſed in the ſame worſhip in Spirit towards the Lord our God, who hath called and taught us to worſhip him in ſpirit and truth, ſo as he taught them, according to the ſhadow and letter? What if I ſhould ſay that we worſhip the Lord in ſpirit on the Lord's-day (which is inward and ſpiritual, the true reſt, the ſubſtantial ſabbath), and that we offer up to him the living ſacrifices, which the high-prieſt of our profeſſion prepares in us for the moſt excellent majeſty and glory of our God therein? Were not the ſacrifices under the law, which they offered up according to the letter, types and ſhadows of what the Lord teacheth us, and giveth us to offer up to him in ſpirit, when we appear before him in his houſe built on his holy mountain? For, friends, the houſe wherein we appear is ſpiritual (an houſe of God's own building); the worſhip ſpiritual, the ſacrifices ſpiritual, the day of worſhip ſpiritual, even the day which the Lord hath made. And here we know and enjoy the things ſhadowed out under the law ſpiritually, eating that which is meat indeed, and drinking that which is drink indeed, even the fleſh and blood of the Son of man; in which we feel and partake of his nature, his virtue, his life, his ſubſtance, and both take it in into us, and put it upon us; ſo that we have Chriſt both to be our food and cloathing; and in the birth, nature and Spirit which is of him, cannot be deceived concerning him.

But the great matter ye ſeem to have againſt us as to ordinances, is about the baptiſm of water, and breaking outward bread, and drinking outward wine; concerning which I have two or three weighty queries to propound to be ſeriouſly conſidered of.

Query 1. Were theſe things themſelves the things of the kingdom, or ſignifications of ſomewhat relating to the kingdom, as the ſhadows under the law were? And ſo, though they might have a uſe and ſervice in the paſſage from the law, yet could they have an abſolute place in the day? For as the day dawns and breaks, the ſhadows fly away. What ſhould the ſhadow do, when that which the ſhadow ſignified is come? What place is there for ſhadows in the ſubſtance, in the everlaſting kingdom?

Now though the apoſtle condeſcended ſo as to circumciſe for the ſake of the Jews, yet circumciſion was not to abide. So he condeſcended alſo as to John's baptiſm; to wit, the baptiſm of water (for that was not Chriſt's baptiſm, but his baptiſm was that of the Holy Ghoſt and fire); yet he bleſſed God he did not make uſe of it, and ſaid, *he was not ſent to baptize.* What was he not ſent to baptize with? Why not with water, not with John's baptiſm; but he was ſent to baptize with Chriſt's baptiſm; to baptize

tize into the name, into the Spirit, into the power (and ſo were all the apoſtles), as well as to preach the goſpel, *Gal.* iii. 5. *Matt.* xxviii. 19.

Then for the outward ſupper: was not that a ſhadow of the true ſubſtantial ſupper of the Lord, of the breaking of the true bread, and drinking of the true wine (the fruit of the vine of life) in the kingdom of God? Which kingdom was at hand in John's time, and the diſciples of Chriſt were to pray it might come; and the apoſtles, and they afterwards (that were in the power, in the life, in the righteouſneſs, in the joy eternal) did witneſs it come. For mark: the promiſe was not only of a kingdom of glory hereafter, when the body is laid down; but they were to receive the kingdom, and feel an entrance (yea, an abundant entrance) into the everlaſting kingdom miniſtered to them even then: and they were to eat bread in the kingdom, and drink wine in the kingdom, even new bread, and new wine, freſh from the table of the Lord, yea, and with the Lord, in his preſence, according to the promiſe, *he would come and dwell in them, and walk in them, and ſup with them, and they with him.* And thus they in their day, and we in our day (bleſſed be the name of the Lord our God) eat and drink of the heavenly bread and wine of the kingdom with Chriſt therein; every one ſitting in the heavenly place, and manſion of reſt, which the Lord hath built up and prepared for him.

Query 2. Have not theſe outward things been much abuſed, and the antichriſtian ſpirit (even the whoriſh ſpirit, which hath adulterated from the life and power of God) appeared in them, and cried them up? And ſurely, as ſo cried up by that ſpirit, they are neither of nor for Chriſt.

And conſider well what that outward court was which God gave to the Gentiles, and what the worſhip and ordinances of the outward court were; and whether they were not given to the Gentiles alſo, and whether theſe are any part of them; for if ſo, then they belong not to, nor are required by, the Lord, of the inward Jews, who are of the circumciſion in the heart, and are come to inherit the ſubſtance.

Query 3. Whether there be any virtue in theſe things in themſelves, without God's requiring of them? Can outward water waſh the ſoul? Can outward bread and wine feed or refreſh it? Indeed if God require a man to waſh his body with water, he ought to be ſubject, and there will be profit to him in his ſubjection; but of itſelf it is but a bodily exerciſe, and without God's requiring it, it would be but will-worſhip, and profit him nothing at all.

Now truly the Lord did never require this of us; but hath ſhewn us the water which our ſouls and bodies had need of to be waſhed with, and the bread and wine which they are to be fed and refreſhed with: and in following the Lord according as he hath led us, and required of us, we have found reconciliation, life, reſt, peace, and joy with our Father, and pure refreſhment from him.

Query 4. As touching duties: Theſe are the two great duties we are taught, *To love the Lord our God with all our heart, ſoul, and ſpirit; and our neighbour as ourſelves.* And theſe we learn by believing in him whom God hath ſent, and receiving the ſeed of life from him; in the growth whereof in us we live, and are made one with him, and partakers of the ability which is of him. For not by working of ourſelves do we attain to this; but by the working of his powerful life in us, through his mercy to us. He circumciſeth us, he cuts off the enmity, he brings under the old nature and ſpirit in us, and then the new ſprings up, and we are renewed in it. And in this we learn and are made able to love the Lord, and his children, and his creatures, yea, all that is of him. And this love conſtrains us to obey the Lord, and deny all for him; ſo that we can ſuffer any thing (through his ſtrength) but ſin, but corruption, but unbelief, but diſobedience to him. Yea, this makes us ſo tender towards him, that we can rather part with all of this world, than the integrity and ſubjection of our ſpirits to him in the leaſt thing that he requires of us; his truth (and our teſtimony thereto) in every reſpect being far dearer to us than our lives, and all the enjoyments and pleaſures of this preſent world.

From theſe two great duties flow many others as towards God; to fear him with the fear which is not taught by the precepts of men, but which he writes in our hearts; to wait upon him night and day in his temple, even in the holy place of his building; to call upon him in the motion, guideance, will, and help of his Spirit (for indeed when once we learn of God, we are taught to pray no more after the fleſh, no more after the will, wiſdom, or way of man); as alſo to be ſenſible of his goodneſs, and give thanks to him in every condition.

And in this we feel his preſence and acceptance, as the Lord is not forgotten by us; but when we eat and drink, walk abroad, or ſtay at home, we feel him near, and our hearts acknowledge him, bow to him, wait upon him, bleſs him, praiſe his name, and ſpeak words concerning him, or to him, with the outward voice, when he gives them, and requires them of us; but of a truth we dare bring no ſacrifices of our own, nor kindle any fire or ſparks of our own; but wait for the holy breath, Spirit, and power of our God, to perform all in us, and by us.

But now, becauſe we do not pray at certain ſet-times (as we formerly were wont to do) nor ſpeak words before and after meat as formerly, and the like, ye are offended with us, and ſay we deny this duty. No, no; we do not deny to God the prayer which is from the birth immortal; but this we ſay, and ſenſibly feel, prayer is a gift, and the ability thereof is in God's Spirit; for we know not what to pray for as we ought, nor have we a power in us to pray when or as we will; but in the Holy Spirit, in his breathing in us, is our ability; and we are to wait on him for the moving and breathing of his Spirit, and not to pray of ourſelves, or in our own wills or times, but in the Father's. And it is a mighty thing to ſpeak to God

God aright in prayer. Fleſh muſt be ſilent before him, and laid ſtill and low in his preſence, that the pure ſpring may open, the pure breath breathe, and the pure voice iſſue forth; for God heareth not ſinners, but the born of him that doth his will. This muſt every ſoul witneſs in his meaſure, as Chriſt witneſſed it in the fulneſs; and there is no ſerving God aright, or performing any duty or ordinance of worſhip to him aright, but in a meaſure of the ſame life and Spirit wherewith Chriſt ſerved him.

Now I do not only own the ſtate of the Jews in their integrity, and of the primitive Chriſtians in theirs, and of what the Lord hath cauſed to break forth in this our day, but I alſo own all the appearances of God all along the night of the apoſtaſy in the holy martyrs and witneſſes, which he raiſed up, and enabled to bear teſtimony to his truth, and againſt the anti-chriſtian practices of many in that dark night of the apoſtaſy. And thus alſo I own all the work of God in my own heart, and in the hearts of others (whom he pleaſed to work upon) in former times; yea, the breathings and deſires which are yet in the hearts of any after the Lord, ſo far as they are in the truth, and of and from the Lord, I cannot but own. But the Lord hath ſhewn me that there is a great mixture in mens deſires and endeavours after him; and that the evil ſpirit (by his ſubtilty) doth often get the managing of them, and turn the very zeal and earneſtneſs of the mind (through prejudices and miſapprehenſions) againſt the Lord and his truth. Now this is a very dangerous ſtate, and there are ſome (who little think ſo) in this ſtate, doing that againſt the Lord, and againſt his Chriſt, his truth, his people, which, if ever their eyes be opened, they will mourn bitterly over; and if their eyes be not opened, but they walk on by a wrong light (even by a light of their own gathering, imagining, and conceiving) whither will it lead them, and what will their end be? Oh! that ye could hear! Oh! that ye could fear aright! Oh! that ye could rightly conſider! Oh! that ye could feel the life and power of the Lord near you, the Word of life near you, even as near as ye have felt the enemy and his temptations, that ye might partake of, and witneſs with joy, the virtue and redemption of it! Oh! that ye could once aright look upon him whom ye have pierced, and yet daily pierce, and cannot but pierce, until the righteous judgments of the Lord be poured out on the head of the tranſgreſſor in you, and the Lord waited upon, feared, and ſubjected to, in the way of his judgments, that ye may feel the refining-work finiſhed, the droſs burned up, the temple prepared, the veſſel brought pure out of the furnace! What then? Why when the Lord hath built up Sion, prepared his temple, cleanſed his houſe, will he not appear there in his glory? Shall it not become an houſe of prayer, of pure prayer, and of pure praiſes? Shall there be any lame or blind ſacrifices offered up there? Shall it not be the beauty of holineſs indeed? Shall not the appearance of the Lord be more glorious there than ever it was in the temple and ordinances under the law? Shall not every living ſtone in this building feel the

God

God of life and power preſent of a truth, and feel not only the earth, but the very heavens melt before him and paſs away, and nothing remain but the pure light and life of the Lamb?

Words and promiſes ſpoken concerning things to be brought forth in the goſpel-ſtate do not go beyond the things ſpoken; but the things brought forth excel and go beyond the words, being ſo felt and enjoyed by that which is fitted and prepared by the Lord, as words cannot utter. The Lord God lead all that rightly deſire after him into the right way (and preſerve them therein) of meeting with and enjoying what their hearts rightly deſire, and beat back the enemy in all his devices of entangling, perplexing, and drawing them aſide; that they may receive the covenant, the new covenant, walk with God in the light thereof, live in the life thereof, obey through the power thereof; and may know what kind of meat and drink, what joy, delight, and pleaſure it is to the ſoul to do the will, in the principle, and by the power, of the new life. So the Lord God Almighty, the creator, guider, and preſerver of his Iſrael, lead you out of the darkneſs, bring you through the wilderneſs, reveal the hope in you, and ſtay your minds thereon, and give you to feel the true travel and faithful walking with him in the footſteps of the flock, which he hath led and is leading his in, and unto ſome of whom (in the tender mercy which from on high hath viſited them) he hath given full reſt and ſatisfaction in his truth.

A

BRIEF ACCOUNT

OF THE

Ground of CERTAINTY and SATISFACTION, which it hath pleaſed the LORD to eſtabliſh in my Heart, concerning Religion, and the Things of His Kingdom.

I HAVE been afflicted from my childhood, mourning and ſeeking after the Lord, and feeling very much grief and pain of ſpirit, through my ſenſe of the want of him. I have not been contented with the way of religion I was educated in, but (through that of God which ſtirred in me) found

found great defects in it, and was drawn and led by his Spirit to travel thro' it, and ſeek further. That which I ſtill ſought after was the reſting-place, the life of my ſoul, and power and preſence of the Lord, that demonſtration of his Spirit (as touching truth and the way of God) which was witneſſed in the days of the apoſtles. Now, breathing after this, but not meeting with it, cauſed unutterable anguiſh, miſery, and diſtreſs in my heart, ſo that my condition could not be hid within mine own breaſt, but my ſorrow alſo brake forth in the ſight of others.

But at length the eternal bowels have pitied me, and have ſhewed me the place of the ſoul's reſt, and I have felt the eternal arm gathering me into, and giving me ſome poſſeſſion of, a meaſure thereof; ſo that my heart is ſatisfied about religion and the things of God's kingdom, being taught of God how to know the Pearl, and the way alſo how to come to inherit and enjoy it; and in that way I have had great experience of the love, mercy, wiſdom, goodneſs, power, and righteouſneſs of the Lord; and notwithſtanding all my ſoul's enemies, I ſtill feel his preſence, life, and power to his praiſe, which doth the work in me, and which giveth me to hope in him, and wait upon him. And now in love and tenderneſs of bowels to others, it is in my heart to anſwer a Queſtion or two about the ground of the aſſurance and ſatisfaction which God hath given my ſoul; it being in my heart not to grieve or trouble any, but only to be helpful in holding forth what the Lord hath demonſtrated to and written in my heart, as he ſhall draw, move, and enable my ſpirit thereunto; to whom my ſoul boweth, and giveth the praiſe all that he hath done in me, and pleaſeth by his Spirit and power to work through me.

Queſt. 1. *It may be enquired by ſome, How I come to know the Spirit of God, and his church, and the ſcriptures of the holy men to be written by the inſpiration and leading of his Holy Spirit; and how I know the motions and drawings of his Spirit in me, from the motions, ſuggeſtions, and temptations of the evil ſpirit; and how I am ſatisfied that I am in the way of truth and life eternal, and do not wander out of it, and err from it?*

Anſw. Thus I know; By receiving, joining to, abiding and growing up in that holy ſeed, which the Father of ſpirits hath ſown in me. There is an elect ſeed which cannot poſſibly be deceived, which ſeed the Father ſoweth, and cauſeth to grow in the hearts of them that receive it; whoſe earth is by him digged and prepared for it. Now I have felt this ſeed from God, this holy, pure thing, which there is nothing like for virtue and excellency. Nothing hath its nature beſides it, nothing manifeſts the Father but it; the heart is changed, renewed, reſtored into the holy image by this alone.

In this ſeed there is no deceit; no deceit ever came from it, no deceit ever entered into it, nor can; and from the day that I have known it, I have always felt preſervation by it, while my heart hath been kept to it. Mine eye never miſ-ſaw in it, mine ear never miſ-heard in it, my heart never

ver miſunderſtood in it; but here I have felt given to me, and maintained in me by God, the eye which ſees, the ear which hears, the heart which underſtands the things of his kingdom; and here the entrance hath been miniſtered into the everlaſting kingdom, where God reveals by his Spirit the myſteries of his kingdom, which all elſe are ſhut out of, but this ſeed and the birth which is of it. And when the enemy hath at any time in my travels, by any temptation or device, got in any degree between my ſoul and this ſeed; then a darkneſs, a loſs, doubts, fears, troubles, *&c.* have ſo far come over my ſoul.

Queſt. 2. *But how know I this ſeed, may ſome enquire?*

Anſw. By its nature, by its properties, by its manifeſting of itſelf in my heart. It hath that light, that life, that power in it, which I never met with any-where elſe. It bruiſeth the head of the Serpent at its pleaſure, whereby I know it to be the ſeed of the woman. It daſheth in pieces (thro' ſubjection to it) whatever is contrary to God, and bringeth up his holy nature in me. It ſo bringeth me into the very image of his Son, that what I read in the ſcriptures concerning the nature, righteouſneſs, and work of ſalvation by Chriſt, I find formed and ſpringing up in mine own heart, as I am gathered into, and brought forth in, this ſeed. Yea, I really feel that I am born of God's Spirit, ſo far as I am born of this. Here I feel, know, underſtand, and am acquainted with the ſubſtance, the thing itſelf, that which all the types and figures of the law ſhadowed out. Here I meet with the circumciſion which is without outward hands; the baptiſm which is without outward water; the ſupper of the Lord, which is without outward bread or wine; and here I know the true Jew, whoſe nature, ſpirit, works, and ways, are all of God, in and through his Son Jeſus Chriſt. And here I muſt profeſs, I cannot doubt concerning the things of God; but in the light and anointing of this ſeed, ſee both the myſtery of iniquity, and the myſtery of godlineſs, and the ways and workings of each ſpirit, both inwardly and outwardly; and my unity with the one (through the tender mercy, goodneſs, love, and power of the Lord, all which are herein revealed), and my ſeparation from the other.

And this is the true way of certainty and ſatisfaction, which is of God, and will ſtand, when all the ſeveral ways of mens inventions will fail of what they promiſe to men, and fall in the ſight of men. For this ſeed and birth of God are to be acknowledged, and reign in the day of his power, and not another. And it is the day of his power in ſome, and ſhall be the day of his power in others; for darkneſs or death ſhall not prevail to bring the life of the riſen Son into the ſepulchre or grave again; but he ſhall ride on conquering and to conquer, ſubduing and to ſubdue, reigning and to reign, until he hath brought all things under the dominion of the Father's power.

A QUESTION

A QUESTION anſwered about the Way of knowing the Motions, Doctrines, and Teachings of CHRIST'S Spirit.

Queſt. *HOW may a man know the motions, doctrines, and teachings of Chriſt's Spirit inwardly, from the deceivable movings, appearings, and workings of a contrary ſpirit? And how may a man know concerning the doctrines that others teach, whether they ſpeak from Chriſt, or whether they ſpeak of themſelves?*

Anſw. This is a great matter indeed, and he muſt firſt receive ſomewhat from God, who is able to do this. He muſt be born of the wiſdom that is from above, he muſt receive a ſpirit of diſcerning from God, he muſt receive ſomewhat of the ſheep's ear, ſomewhat of the holy underſtanding, whereby he may be made able to diſtinguiſh ſpirituals, and put a difference between the pure and impure; between the pretender to the things of God, and him which is indeed of God. There is a balance of the ſanctuary appointed to weigh ſpiritual things and appearances in; and by this balance alone are they truly and rightly diſcerned and diſtinguiſhed; and this balance is in the ſanctuary, in the holy heavenly place in Chriſt Jeſus, where the true weight of ſpiritual things (or things that pretend to be truly ſpiritual and living, but are not) is given and diſcerned. But he that weighs without this, he that weighs by his own judgment and underſtanding, by his own comprehenſion and conceivings; he weighs by that which is uncertain, changeable, and fallible, and turns up and down according to the appearances of things to him, but judgeth not the righteous judgment, which is from the ſenſe, and in the light, of truth.

Therefore, oh! that men were humble, tender, meek, and ſenſible of their inability to judge as of themſelves, that they might ſee their need of this gift of God, and wait upon him for it; being in the mean time as the weaned child, not meddling with things too high for them, but keeping and abiding low in fear and ſubjection to that which the Lord hath already made manifeſt to them. For what man is there, to whom the Lord hath not already (in his tender mercy and goodneſs) made ſomewhat of himſelf manifeſt? Who is there, who by the light of the Spirit of God in his conſcience, knoweth not ſome evil which he ought to leave undone, and ſome good which he ought to do? Now this is the way of God, and the work which man ſhould be exerciſed in, to feel his mind gathered into that which teacheth this, that he might receive power from the Lord to ceaſe to do the evil which he is thus warned by him of, and to do the good which is thus

required of him. For thus the Spirit of the Lord teacheth and requireth of men, even inwardly in their ſecret parts, ſecretly quickening and enlivening them in ſome meaſure, and giving them a ſenſe of their ſin, death, ſeparation from him, miſery and danger thereby; for where there is any ſight of ſin, and any ſenſe of the burden thereof, there is ſome life, ſome light, ſome little ſtirrings of the life, and ſome quickenings thereby, without which this ſenſe could not be. Now mark.

Are not here the drawings of the Father? Are not here the teachings of the Father, though but in a little meaſure; yet true, yet living? Is not here ſome little diſcerning given between the precious and the vile; between ſomewhat that is of God, and ſomewhat that is againſt him? Well then, here is the gift of diſcerning, though in a poor, low, little, weak meaſure; and that man who receiveth this, receiveth the beginnings of the gift, ſomewhat of the gift, whereby he may be able to diſcern and diſtinguiſh a little about ſpiritual things, ſo far as the light and ability of the gift in him extendeth.

Now this is man's work (and in this lies his ſafety), to come hither, abide here, and grow here. Not to judge out of this; to judge no farther concerning the things of God, than this judgeth in him; to keep the judgment which he hath from this; not hearkening to the ſubtil devices of the enemy, which will ſtrive afterward to cloud his mind, delude and deceive him, with a falſe appearance of wiſe reaſonings and diſputings of his own, or from other men, to make him believe otherwiſe. And ſo keeping what ground he hath gained, he is to wait for more of this light, more of this life, more of this virtue, that his ſoul may grow up and increaſe therein, that his eye may be ſtrengthened to ſee further, and his ear to hear further, and his heart to embrace more of the inſtructions and directions of the Spirit of the Lord, unto and in the way of the kingdom.

Therefore the man that would meet with, and receive from God, the gift of diſcerning, let him mind the preſent manifeſtation of God's light from his Spirit in his heart; embrace that, fall in with that, take heed of the reaſonings of the mind againſt the convictions and demonſtrations of God's Spirit, but receive the truth in the love of it, even the loweſt appearance of truth, about the leaſt and moſt deſpiſeable things, and give up faithfully to the Lord therein, without murmuring, without diſputing, without conſulting with fleſh and blood. And he that is faithful to the light of the Spirit (and to the diſcerning which is thereby) in the little, he ſhall receive more, he ſhall have his light and diſcerning thereby increaſed, as his need requireth. But he that ſtands diſputing, and would have all his way made clear to him, before he ſets one ſtep in it; he is far from becoming that child, which the Father teacheth, and adminiſtereth an entrance into the kingdom to.

This, in effect, was the very anſwer which Chriſt gave to this thing in the days of his fleſh, when there were great diſputes concerning his doctrine, how to know whether it was of God or no. What was the reſolution he gave of this; *If any man*, ſaith he, *will do his will, he ſhall know of the doctrine*

doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I ſpeak of myſelf, John vii. 17. Wouldſt thou know of the Son's doctrine? Wouldſt thou know whether it be the doctrine of the Son indeed, the doctrine of him who comes from the Father? Yes, very fain, will the upright heart ſay; oh! that I might know concerning what riſes and opens in my heart, whether it be from the Spirit of God, or from the root of deceit in me! Why this is the way; do the Father's will.

Object. *Do the Father's will; why what an anſwer is this! The diſpute is about the Father's will. Is not the doctrine of the Son the Father's will? How can I do the Father's will, which the Son is to teach me, until I firſt know of the Son's doctrine.*

Anſw. It is true, the Son's doctrine is the Father's will, and thou canſt not do the Father's will but as thou receiveſt the Son's doctrine. But mark; There are diſputes in thy mind about ſomewhat of the Son's doctrine, whether it be his doctrine or no; ſomewhat alſo about inward motions, workings, and ſtirrings in thee, which thou wouldſt fain know whence they are. Now the queſtion is concerning the way how thou mayeſt attain to this; how thou mayeſt come to a certain and ſatisfactory knowledge herein? Which is, not by entering into reaſonings and diſputes about theſe things whereof thou doubteſt, but by coming into that wherein and whereby they are made manifeſt; and that is by coming into obedience to the Father in that, which he hath already made manifeſt; for in that light (to them that believe in it) and in obedience thereto (be it ever ſo little, or the manifeſtation ever ſo ſmall), the Father will reveal more, and give to that heart and mind to be ſenſible of what is of him, and what is of the enemy, ſo far as is needful for it as yet to know. For wiſe and abſolute judgment in all things, is not neceſſary for a babe; but ſenſe to know the breaſt, and to receive from it the milk, by which it is to be fed that it may grow. This is enough in its preſent ſtate; yet if there be need of ſtrength at any time to ſtill the enemy and the avenger, the Lord will reveal it in the heart, and bring it forth out of the mouths of the babes and ſucklings, to the perfecting of his praiſe.

So mind and learn the way, O ye that are ſimple-hearted (and truly deſire after the Lord, and the purity and power of his kingdom), and take heed of the wrong way; take heed of man's way, which is by conſulting with his own wiſdom, and weighing things in the balance of his own reaſon and underſtanding; and thus he may weigh ſcriptures written in former ages, and the appearances of God in this age, and err in heart, mind and judgment concerning them both, all his days. But he that waits on the Lord in fear, and in obedience to that which is already made manifeſt, not deſiring knowledge from God in his own will, time, or way, but in the Lord's, who perfectly knows every one's ſtate, and what is fit for him; he ſhall know concerning every doctrine his heart deſireth to be inſtructed in, in the Lord's ſeaſon; and in the mean time the Lord will feed him with food convenient,

nient, and cloathe him with cloathing convenient; and there ſhall be no want to him, who boweth before the Lord in what is already made manifeſt, and waiteth for his further manifeſtations and appearances. But the wiſe hunter after knowledge before the Lord leads, and further than he leads and teaches; this is the firſt birth, which is excluded the kingdom and the myſteries thereof: this is he who always deſpiſed and would ſtill kill the heir, that the inheritance might be his; but the inheritance is appointed for, and given to, another; even to the Lamb's nature, the Lamb's Spirit, the Lamb's innocency, the birth of another wiſdom, which is a fooliſh weak birth in his eye, and not worthy at all to inherit; but it is the Father's pleaſure to give the kingdom and inheritance of life everlaſting to theſe.

To ſpeak yet a little more plainly, and bring it yet a little cloſer to the heart, if it may be. It hath pleaſed the Father, in this day of his love and power, to gather a little flock out of the world (and all worldly profeſſions of worſhip and religion) to himſelf. This flock he hath gathered by a poor, little, low thing in their hearts, exerciſing them thereby in poor, mean, and contemptible ways to the eye of the world, and to all the profeſſions of man's wiſdom; and by this, and concerning this, he teſtifieth (through thoſe whom he hath gathered) to others. And the teſtimony doth evidence itſelf (through the power of the Spirit) to all that wait upon God for an ear, and hear in the ſimplicity thereof.

Now when we tell men of a divine principle, of a ſeed of God, wherein their religion is to begin, and from which it is to grow, and whereof they are to be born; this will enter into many, yea many will aſſent to be drawn ſo far as to wait inwardly for, and upon this. But now when this begins to ſtir and move in them, it is in ſuch a way, and many times about ſuch low, mean, contemptible things in their eyes, that they are very apt to deſpiſe it, and enter into diſputes againſt it, and ſo miſs of the entrance, and can never thus enter into it; but inſtead thereof are filled with doubts about the leader and his motions, and puzzled and entangled in their minds, and ſtopt at the very beginning. And ſo, though they deſire much, and hope much; yet all comes to little, becauſe the enemy hath poſſeſſed their minds with a device of his ſubtilty, as if theſe were ſmall things and of little concernment. That which they want is the powerful life, the clear light, *&c.* and ſo their minds are taken up with thoughts about theſe great things, and deſires after theſe great things, and they overlook the way wherein and whereby theſe are to be witneſſed and obtained.

For the Lord God, in his infinite wiſdom, picked out theſe contemptible things to exerciſe his flock by, and to lead them in. And whatever men may think of them, yet none knows (but they who experience it) how hard it is to follow and ſubject to the Lord in theſe, and how much they bow down and break the earthly and uncircumciſed ſpirit in a man. Now, Friend, thou who deſireſt life from God, oh! take heed thou doſt not beat back

back the beginnings of his life, and the redemption of thy ſoul, by deſpiſing and overlooking the day of ſmall things. Why may not God chuſe to lead thee in the way that he hath led the reſt of his flock? Why ſhouldſt not thou alſo come to deny the cuſtoms and vanities of this world (and come into that which is ſimple and plain), and ſtand in the will and life of God out of them? Are not the ways, cuſtoms, and vanities of the world, of the ſpirit of the world, and not of the Father? Did they not come from the corrupt part? Are they not of the corrupt part? Do they not pleaſe the corrupt part? Muſt they not be left behind by him that travels into the ſeed, is one with the ſeed, and lives in the ſeed? Why wilt thou ſtick in theſe things? Why wilt thou diſpute about theſe things? Oh! feel the Father's drawings, firſt out of the world, firſt out of that which is not of the Father, but of the world; that he may draw thee further and further, even into the kingdom and power everlaſting, which are many days journey beyond that which thou ſtickeſt at.

Now mind and remember this which followeth:

In the days of Chriſt and his apoſtles, God choſe the fooliſh things, and the weak things, and things that were not, to hide the path of life, and the myſteries of his kingdom, from the wiſe ſearching eye of man in thoſe days. Why may he not chuſe the like things now? Why may he not now reveal things to the babes, and not to the wiſe of this age and generation? Why may it not be to his glory, to have it now ſaid alſo, *Where is the wiſe? Where is the Scribe* (where is the learned man)? *Where is the diſputer of this world?* Can any of them find out that, or any of them diſcern that, which God revealeth to his little ones? No, no: They are generally got too high above that little, low, tender, meek, ſenſible principle, in the faith whereof, and in obedience whereto, the teachings of God are received, and his life and power witneſſed. And becauſe of their riches, wiſdom, and knowledge out of this, therefore is the entrance into the pure living truth (which cleanſeth the mind, and keepeth it clean, which quickeneth it, and keepeth it living), to them ſo exceeding difficult.

And as the principle is little, the ſeed of the kingdom little (like a grain of muſtard-ſeed), the leaſt of all ſeeds; ſo, why may not its appearance alſo be little, even in low weak things, deſpiſeable to man's eye and wiſdom; which man ſees nothing in, and may account of no value? And yet, the power of the croſs (which brings down, and ſlays the corruptible), and the reſurrection of the life, may be witneſſed and felt in them. *The fooliſhneſs of God is wiſer than men, and the weakneſs of God is ſtronger than men:* and he knoweth what he doth in leading his children in this contemptible path, and by theſe contemptible exerciſes, which all that is wiſe, high, lofty, and aſpiring, according to the fleſh, may eaſily overlook and ſlight, but can hardly ſtoop down and ſubject to.

God.

God is the ſame that ever he was; and he ſtill appears in the way of his own wiſdom, and out of man's; and he that will partake of God's wiſdom muſt deny and keep out of his own. His touches, his drawings, his teachings, his bleſſings, his love, his peace, his joy, his ſweetneſs, *&c.* are let forth upon, felt, and enjoyed by the ſoul, in the new creation, in the new ſenſe, in the denial and paſſing out of the old.

SOMEWHAT

Touching the GOSPEL-REST, or SABBATH.

WHAT is the goſpel-reſt? What is the goſpel-ſabbath? Is it a ſhadow, as that of the law was? Or is it the ſubſtance of that which the law ſhadowed out?

The law was given by Moſes. Moſes, by the command of God, gave forth the ſhadows of the heavenly things under the law; *But grace and truth came by Jeſus Chriſt.* The true ſabbath, the true reſt, the law of the Spirit of life, in and to the true Jews, comes by him. The law of Moſes had the ſhadow of the good things to come; which good things themſelves the goſpel contains, bringing life and immortality to light, and the ſoul into the enjoyment and poſſeſſion of the heavenly things themſelves.

The apoſtle diſputes the caſe about both theſe, *Heb.* iv. both about the ſeventh day of reſt, and about the land of reſt; ſhewing, that they were neither of them the ſubſtance; they were but the reſts which were to paſs away. But beſides them, there was a reſt remaining, a day of reſt remaining, a land of reſt remaining; whereof they both (both the outward ſabbath of reſt, and the land of reſt under the law) were figures.

Now, for whom did this reſt remain? Why, it remained for the true Jews, for believers, for the ſpiritual circumciſion in the times of the goſpel. *And we* (ſaid he) *who have believed, do enter into reſt.* The faith gives entrance, the Son's faith; the faith which ſtands in the power, the faith which is victory, and gives victory over ſin and the world, removes the mountains and difficulties which ſtand in the way, and gives entrance into the goſpel-reſt. Faith, which is from and of the power of the endleſs life, puts ſin under, brings down ſelf, gathers man into a new principle, brings man forth in a new principle, cauſeth him to live and act in a new principle, *&c.* And as man comes thither, and that life riſeth and hath power in him, it cauſeth him to reſt from his own works, and to wait for and experience God, in and through Chriſt, to work all, and be all in him.

The apoſtle Peter alſo ſpeaks of this reſt, and declares how it is attained, even by ſuffering in the fleſh, *He that hath ſuffered* (ſaith he) *in the fleſh, hath*

hath ceaſed from ſin, 1 Peter iv. 1. It is the fleſhly part, the motions in the fleſh, from whence ſin ariſeth.

Luſt, when it is conceived, bringeth forth ſin. Now Chriſt hath prepared and appointed a croſs, a ſpiritual yoke, to bring down the fleſh, which cauſeth great ſuffering in the fleſh to him that taketh it upon him. To deny all ungodlineſs, and every worldly luſt, motion, deſire, and delight of the fleſhly mind and nature, there is a ſore ſuffering to the earthly part; but yet this bringeth down the earthly part in all that take it up, and helpeth and cauſeth to ceaſe from ſin. And he that hath taken up the croſs wholly, and felt the thorough work of it, and ſuffered in the fleſh the parting with and crucifying all that is of the fleſh, that which would cauſe him to ſin is ſlain in him, and he ceaſeth from ſin. Then he is in the reſt; then he keeps the reſt fully; then he knows the yoke and croſs, which was once burdenſome to him, to become eaſy and delightful, that being worn out in him to which it was painful.

Now he that is in meaſure delivered, that hath in meaſure ſuffered, findeth ſome reſt, and may in ſome meaſure keep the ſabbath; yea, in the faith, the weakeſt babe (abiding there) cannot but keep the ſabbath, and offer up the ſacrifices, and perform the ſervices thereof to the Lord. For the worſhip of the New-Teſtament relates not to outward times or days; but is in the Spirit, in the truth, in the name, in the power, in the ſubſtance, on the day, and in the times and ſeaſons which the Lord hath made, and makes, in the ſpirits of his people.

And here that ſcripture is witneſſed to thoſe that are born of the Spirit, and live in the Spirit, and walk after the Spirit: *ſin ſhall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace.* Who are not under the law, but under grace? Why they that are gathered by the grace, that hear the voice of God in the grace, drawing and enabling them to follow; they whom the grace overſhadows from the power and dominion of ſin; they are under it, they are ſheltered, ſaved, and preſerved by it.

He that is born of God ſinneth not, but obeyeth the grace; but he that committeth ſin, is the ſervant of ſin, and not yet made free by the grace and power of the Son from it. Yea, the Son gives that freedom in his day from ſin, and the power of Satan, as they that are out of the light of his day cannot ſo much as believe; but they that are gathered into, and walk in the light thereof, they witneſs the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus, making them free from the law of ſin and death. What! is the ſtronger than the ſtrong-man come, with his law and power of the endleſs life, and ſhall not he manifeſt his dominion in the heart over the law of ſin and death? Yea, as it is received, and let in, it works out, overcomes, bears down, over-runs the law of ſin and death; and that promiſe is witneſſed, fulfilled, *O death! I will be thy death.*

And if God, by the power and breath of his Holy Spirit, with the living powerful laws thereof, kill ſin and death in the heart, what ſhall make them alive

alive again? No, no; then they are dead indeed, and the kingdom and reign of Chriſt is witneſſed in that ſoul.

Then the birth of life is witneſſed; then the man-child is witneſſed, ruleing with a rod of iron, daſhing in pieces all motions and temptations to corruption, and all that would defile, ſo that they cannot enter the mind; and guarding it in the pure peace, unſpeakable joy, and reſt of the Son continually. And there it is as truly witneſſed inwardly (as ever it was at any time enjoyed or hoped for by the Jews outwardly) that this horn of ſalvation, which God hath raiſed up in the houſe of his ſervant David, breaks all the horns of the oppreſſors, and gives reſt to the ſoul from them round about, that, without fear of them any more, it may ſerve him in holineſs and righteouſneſs before him all the days of its life.

There are ſome good deſires in many people, for which bleſſed be the name of the Lord; but there is great error of judgment, and wandering up and down from the truth, for want of that which is able to ſtay the mind upon the Lord, and to guide it in the right way. Some run to this mountain, and ſacrifice there; others to that hill, and offer there; but few know the true reſting-place, or the place of the true worſhip. Now in theſe their errors they can witneſs no acceptance with the Lord. Oh! that they knew the acceptable thing, the acceptable way of worſhip, and might appear before, and be found of the Lord therein! Then might they begin in that which is ſubſtantial (in the goſpel Spirit, life, and power) and come to inherit and ſit down in that which is ſubſtantial and everlaſting.

Some QUERIES

TO SUCH

As complain of Want of Power to become the LORD's, and ſerve him; and who are not yet ſo acquainted with the Truth as to witneſs the Cleanſing by it, and ceaſing from Sin.

Query 1. WAS not Chriſt made a king and prieſt after the power of an endleſs life? And doth he not communicate of the power of that endleſs life to all that rightly believe in him, receive the truth as it is in him, and obey his goſpel?

Query 2. Was it not the end of Chriſt's coming to deſtroy ſin in the heart, and to ſet the ſoul free therefrom, that it might ſerve the Lord in the liberty, life, and power of his Spirit?

Query

Query 3. To them that believe in and receive him, doth not Chriſt give power to become ſons to God? And to them that are ſons, doth not the Father give the Spirit of the Son? And hath not the Spirit of the Son power over the contrary ſpirit?

Query 4. Were not the deliverances of the Jews under the law real deliverances from their outward enemies? And are not Chriſt's deliverances as real from the inward enemies? Whom the Son maketh free, are they not free indeed? Free from ſin, free from Satan, being under the ſhadow of the wing of the Almighty, which preſerveth out of the darkneſs, and guardeth the mind from the evil and danger thereof?

Query 5. Is not Chriſt ſtronger than the ſtrong man, whom he cometh to diſpoſſeſs? Are not his weapons ſtronger than the weapons of the enemy? Is not he able to diſpoſſeſs him, to caſt him out, to ſpoil him of his goods and ſtrength? And when he hath gained the houſe, is not he able to cleanſe it, and garniſh, and keep it clean and pure in the way of his covenant, againſt all the enemy can do?

Query 6. Doth not Chriſt dwell in the heart by faith? And is not Chriſt's nature and Spirit pure, and will he dwell in any thing that is impure? Is not the ſpiritual temple under the goſpel to be as pure inwardly as ever the outward temple under the law was to be pure outwardly, or by way of repreſentation? Muſt not they be cleanſed from all filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit, who witneſs the Father dwelling in them, and walking in them?

Query 7. Who offer up the incenſe and the pure offering in the times of the goſpel? Can any do it but the ſons of Levi, whom the Lord hath purified? Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Who can compaſs the altar of the Lord, or offer up an acceptable offering there, whoſe heart and hands are not waſhed in innocency?

Query 8. Is not the worſhip of the New-Teſtament to be in ſpirit and truth? Is not the Spirit pure, the truth pure? Can any unclean thing enter into it? Can any be in it, can any worſhip in it, but they which be cleanſed, purified, and changed by it?

Query 9. How did the apoſtle expreſs the right manner of drawing nigh to God in the ſpiritual goſpel-worſhip? Was it not to be thus, with the heart cleanſed from an evil conſcience, and the body waſhed with clean water? And is not the preſence, power, and acceptance of God witneſſed by them that appear before him and worſhip him thus?

Query 10. Had not other lords dominion over the heart, to ſubdue it to ſin, and defile it, before Chriſt was known and received in his Spirit and power? But when Chriſt is known and received in his Spirit and power, have the other lords power to do ſo ſtill? Is not Chriſt's law, the law of his Spirit of life, able to bring under, and make the ſoul free from the law of ſin and death? Inſomuch as now it may be ſaid in truth, by the ſouls whom he hath ſet free, *O Lord, our God! other lords beſides thee have*

had dominion over us; but (now henceforward) *by thee only will we make mention of thy name.*

Query 11. Was it not a brand of ignominy on thoſe who had got the good words and high notions about Chriſt, but were not in the authority and power of his Spirit, that they had eyes full of adultery, and could not ceaſe from ſin? Can any ceaſe from ſin but he that receiveth the power? And he that receiveth the power of the new life, is it not natural to him to ceaſe from ſin, and unnatural to him to commit it?

Query 12. Is not the Lord the teacher of his people under the new covenant? Was it not promiſed of old concerning the goſpel-times, and is it not fulfilled in the goſpel-times, *that all thy children ſhall be taught of the Lord?* And what doth the Lord teach? Doth he not teach to *ceaſe from doing evil, and to learn to do well?* And ſhall his children never learn this leſſon of him?

Query 13. Whoſe ſervants are they that obey unrighteouſneſs? Are they cloathed with the ſtrength of God? Do they ſtand in the power of his might againſt the power of the enemy? Are they overcomers of the wicked-one? Or are they not rather daily overcome by him?

Query 14. What is the whole armour of God provided and appointed for? Is it not to keep out the enemy wholly? And is it able to do it, or no?

Query 15. Will not Chriſt ſay to all men upon the earth, profeſs they what they will, hope in Chriſt, and caſt themſelves upon him for ſalvation ever ſo much, and ever ſo often; yea, though they have received ſuch power from him as to preach in his name, and to caſt out devils in his name; yet if they have not ſo received the power as to overcome ſin in their own hearts, and to cauſe them to ceaſe from working iniquity, though they call him Lord, and cry to him with confidence, *Lord, Lord, open to us*, yet will he not ſay to them, *Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, I know ye not*; ye are not of the birth of my power; ye are not thoſe which have done my will; ye were never by me redeemed out of the evil-doing; but have ſtill all your days (notwithſtanding your profeſſion, notwithſtanding your knowledge, notwithſtanding your owning me as your Lord, and preaching in my name) been workers of iniquity.

Query 16. He that receiveth the ſpiritual circumciſion and baptiſm of Chriſt, doth it not cauſe him to ceaſe from ſin? And doth not the new life ſpring up in him, which cauſeth him to live holily to God? He that hath the offending eye plucked out, the offending hand cut off, is not that taken away from him which cauſed him to ſin? And he who is created a new creature in Chriſt, doth he not naturally do that which is holy and righteous? 1 *John* iii. 7, 8.

Query 17. Doth not the true faith, the faith of the Son of God, give victory over ſin? Can any believer be conquered by the enemy, he ſtanding in the faith, abiding in the covenant? Doth not the power ſtretched

out

out by the Father of life defend the ſoul in the way of the covenant againſt all the aſſaults of the enemies, ſo that the gates of hell cannot prevail againſt any here, but the name of the Lord is felt a ſtrong tower againſt them; and though they encompaſs like bees, yet in the name of the Lord victory is witneſſed over them, and againſt all that they can do? And doth not the Lord teach and enable his to keep covenant?

Query 18. Was not ſuch a thing witneſſed by Paul (and may not ſuch a thing be witneſſed by the believing and obedient travellers now), *I can do all things through Chriſt that ſtrengthens me. I know how to want, I know how to abound; every-where, and in all things, I am inſtructed*, &c. I am armed with the whole armour of God, and taught to ſtand ſo upon my guard in the power of his life, that the enemy cannot come at me; but the power of the endleſs life ſo preſerveth me, as that the evil-one cannot touch me, cannot enter me with any of his temptations in any condition?

Query 19. Was there not ſuch a condition once witneſſed, and may it not be witneſſed again, of being more than conquerors through the love and power of Chriſt? When the life doth ariſe in its power and dominion in the heart, doth it not ſoon ſcatter the enemies? Do they not fly away, and are chaſed at the blaſt of God's Spirit? When the ſoul is filled with the love and with the power, is not the land cleanſed of what annoyed it? And this, which is ſometimes felt by many of the travellers, may it not be an abiding ſtate? Are there not dwelling-places on Mount Sion (on the Mount of God's holineſs in the goſpel-time), and is not there ſecurity from ſin, Satan, the ſoul's enemies, and dangers? *They ſhall not hurt nor deſtroy in all my holy mountain, ſaith the Lord*; and will he not fulfil it to thoſe that wait upon him in the way of his covenant?

The CONCLUSION.

THERE is a principle of darkneſs in the hearts and minds of men, which is as a ſeed or root of corruption in them, bringing forth in them fruits of ſin and unrighteouſneſs unto death.

And there is alſo a principle of the pure heavenly light, as a free gift from God, to diſcover the darkneſs, turn man's heart againſt it, and lead him into the way and path of life.

Now as Satan rules in the principle of darkneſs, and there is the power of death therein; ſo God rules in the principle of light, and there is the power of life and redemption manifeſted by God therein.

For this principle is of the Father, of the Son, of the Spirit; yea, the Father, Son, and Spirit are in this principle; and here the ſoul meets with them, and is brought into union and fellowſhip with them, and feels the everlaſting arm revealed and ſtretched forth for its delivery from corruption, and the captivity thereof, into the liberty of the Sons of God.

And he that is here meets with the ſubſtance of things, and that which all the types of the law ſhadowed out; meets with the one offering, the cleanſing which is thereby, the imputation of righteouſneſs, or of faith unto righteouſneſs; yea, and with ſomewhat more, even with the everlaſting righteouſneſs itſelf brought into the heart, and dwelling there; inſomuch as his nature is changed (truly changed) his ſpirit changed, his mind, heart, ſoul, and conſcience changed, his converſation changed, the leopard's ſpots and the Ethiopian's ſkin waſhed away, the deceitfulneſs of the heart removed, and the new garments of righteouſneſs, life, and ſalvation put on in the ſtead thereof; ſo that he is uncloathed of the evil, unholy nature and ſpirit, and cloathed with the Spirit of the Lord.

For Chriſt is really made unto him wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption. How is that? Why he that once was a fool, is now made wiſe unto God, and the things of his kingdom, by the myſtery of his Son's life and power, revealed in him. He is a child of wiſdom, and he hath heard the wiſdom of his mother, and learned wiſdom of her. So putting on Chriſt, who is the righteouſneſs, being ingrafted into him, being brought forth in him, he partakes of the ſweetneſs and fatneſs of the olive-tree, and is renewed into the image of the true righteouſneſs and holineſs, and drinks in the virtue and life of the precious promiſes, wherein and whereby he is made partaker of the divine nature, and ſo cannot but witneſs redemption from the earthly corrupt nature.

Now it is not any ſtriving, believing, or obedience of man's own ſpirit, which can effect this; he may will ſtrongly, he may run hard, and yet never obtain; he may ſo caſt himſelf upon the mercy of God, and hope concerning his mercy in Chriſt, as to miſs of it.

But the principle of life which is from God, and faith in God from that principle, without fail effects this, and no other faith doth. But out of this are the myſterious images and idols, and ſubtil workings and devices of the cunning-one, to take up the mind with ſomewhat which appears as ſubſtantial and truly excellent, but is not ſo indeed. His birth hath deſires after the kingdom (and makes no queſtion but it ſhall be his), wills, runs, ſtrives, believes, hopes, prays, reads ſcriptures, obſerves duties and ordinances; and in theſe they meet with a wrong knowledge, a wrong ſanctification, a wrong joy, a wrong confidence and aſſurance, a wrong reſt and peace; in which there may be a great warmth, and ſeeming life and pleaſure, from the fire and ſparks of their own kindling and blowing up, which the mind that is blinded by him can hardly ſuſpect that it is not true; yea, may be taken with it, and ſtrongly juſtify it in its own thoughts for the true, and ſet it above that that is indeed the true. This, this is the great myſtery of iniquity, which hath great ſubtilty of deceivableneſs in it, to pick up and ſteal away the good ſeed out of the heart, and to ſteal in a falſe image and likeneſs thereof, which may have a more glorious appearance to man's eye than the true ſeed itſelf (for that is the leaſt of all

ſeeds,

ſeeds, makes the leaſt ſhew of any), but hath not the ſame nature, virtue, and power.

Ah! the Lord God of tender mercy help all the poor ſouls that breathe after him, that they may not be thus deceived. And thoſe that are thus deceived, and in the ſnare of the enemy (and do not witneſs the faith which hath the Son's dominion in it, and gives victory over ſin, Satan, and the world, and wherein the blood of ſprinkling, which livingly waſheth, is felt, in the light of life, wherein the redeemed walk to the praiſe of their redeemer); the Lord guide them alſo to that wherein all deceits are made manifeſt, and where the truth, which is of the Son, is made to ſhine in ſuch who were once in the barren places, and in the thick darkneſs, but now are light in the Lord, and who have a dwelling-place with the Lord in his light, which is the pure and everlaſting habitation. *Amen.*

A POSTSCRIPT,

CONTAINING

Some further QUERIES concerning the NEW COVENANT.

Query 1. WHAT is the new covenant? Is it not an agreement between God and the ſoul in Chriſt, according to the law of faith, as the old covenant was an agreement between God and the people of the Jews, according to the law of works?

Query 2. Who is the Mediator of this covenant? Is it not the Lord Jeſus Chriſt? Doth not he prepare the heart for the covenant, bring into the covenant, keep in the covenant, preſerve peace between God and the ſoul, and keep the ſoul in the way of truth and peace?

Query 3. Who is the Shepherd, King, and Prophet in this covenant? Is it any other than Chriſt the Mediator? Is not he the King and Prophet raiſed up to rule in righteouſneſs, and to inſtruct in the path of life? And is not his Spirit able to teach and inſtruct in all things, and able to govern and rule in righteouſneſs all that are ſubject to his breathings, quickenings, and holy movings, and inſtructions in their hearts, who writes his law there, and guides and governs by the law which he writes?

Query 4. How come men into this covenant or holy agreement with God? Is it not by repentance and faith? Is it not by turning from the darkneſs, which is not of him, to the light, which is of him? Is it not by turning from the ſpirit of Satan to his Spirit; from the ſtandard and power of the wicked-one, to the ſtandard and power of the Holy One? What is it that God lifts up againſt the darkneſs of the enemy, but the light of his Spirit, which diſcovers where a man hath been (and what he hath done) and gives him

him to repent thereof; and forſake all his dead works, and turn to the life and power which inſtructs and quickens him, in and by the Holy Spirit? And this is true converſion; and thus a man feels the covenant of ſin, death, and hell broken, and enters into a new covenant, a pure covenant, a living covenant, a powerful covenant, and comes to feel thoſe things which the covenant contains, as his condition requires, and as his capacity is made able to receive.

Query 5. How do men come to abide in this covenant? Is there any abiding but according to the entrance? Is there any ſtaying in the covenant, but in and by the faith that lets in? Doth not unbelief and diſobedience keep out from it at firſt? And doth not unbelief and diſobedience cut off from it afterwards? For there are ſins againſt this covenant, as well as againſt the old; and the ſins againſt this are more dangerous to the ſoul than the ſins againſt the old. *Take heed* (ſaid the apoſtle) *leſt there be in any of you an heart of unbelief, to depart from the living God.* And ſaith Moſes, ſpeaking of the prophet, or angel of this covenant, *Beware of him, and obey his voice; for he will not pardon your tranſgreſſions, for my name is in him; and whoſoever hearkeneth not to this prophet, he ſhall be cut off.* How can it be otherwiſe? For he ſpeaks life, and he ſpeaks it in the covenant to the circumciſed ear, to the ſoul in the faith, in the obedience. *Hear, and your ſouls ſhall live.* So then he that hears not muſt needs abide in death; and he that departs from hearing him, muſt needs return to death.

Query 6. Whether there be any purifying of the heart, or any juſtification, or keeping the veſſel clean, out of the obedience of the truth? *If a man keep my ſayings* (ſaith Chriſt) *he ſhall never ſee death. If ye* (ſaith the apoſtle) *through the Spirit, mortify the deeds of the body, ye ſhall live.* But if the deeds of the body be not mortified by the Spirit, if a man do not keep the ſayings of Chriſt, doth he, or can he live then? Is not this then the main thing in religion, that a man receive the truth in the faith, and that he feel the power of the Spirit of life bringing him into, and keeping him in, the obedience thereof. For it is the truth that ſaves; the living truth, the living knowledge, the living faith; the law of the Spirit of life that makes free from the law of ſin and death; and it makes free by its powerful working in the mind, working out, and preſerving from, that which defiles, captivates, and deſtroys. For Chriſt comes with his power to ſave, with his power to break the bonds of darkneſs, and to ſet the captive free: with his power to diſlodge and diſpoſſeſs all the enemies, and ſanctify the veſſel to himſelf; and the effects of his power in and upon the heart are his ſalvation; and he that falleth ſhort of the miniſtration of the power of life to his ſoul, and of the effects thereof in his ſoul, is ſo far defective in point of ſalvation: for no man is ſaved farther than he is redeemed and delivered from that which Chriſt comes to ſave him from.

Query 7. Whether the firſt thing of all to be witneſſed in religion is not the Spirit of Chriſt? Is not the whole work to be done by him? And how

how can a man be certain concerning any work wrought in him, unleſs he be certain that it is he that works? How can I be certain concerning the knowledge given me, unleſs I be ſure it be he that gives it? How can I be certain concerning any prayers or breathings ariſing in my heart, unleſs I be ſure they be from him? How can I underſtand any ſcripture concerning Chriſt, or the knowledge of any ſpiritual thing, unleſs I be ſure he open it to me? And how can I be ſure of any thing that he giveth or openeth to me, further than I know him, and have the true ſenſe of him in his nature and operations? So then, if the Spirit be my leader, guide, teacher, inſtructor in the way of life, in the covenant of life, in the things of the kingdom, in the knowledge of ſcriptures, *&c*, it is of great concernment to me to receive that ear and heart from God, which knows and underſtands his voice; for, for want of this, are all the defects, miſtakes, miſcarriages, and errors, in and about religion. But as men come to this, they come out of error into certainty, and know the one Chriſt, the one faith, the one baptiſm, the one body, the one church, and aſſembly of the firſt-born, the pure love, which is of and in the truth, the pure path of the kingdom, the way of holineſs, which the ranſomed and redeemed walk in; yea, the Lord is One, and his name One among all that are here, and the pure One language, which is of the Spirit, wiſdom, and teaching, is here received, and the One voice of the ſhepherd heard, *&c*. But out of this are the janglings, ſtrifes, contentions, debates, diſputes; ſubtil, wiſe, entangling reaſonings of the earthly, one with another, and all as one againſt the heavenly and ſpiritual.

Query 8. Did not the meſſage which Chriſt ſent his apoſtles to preach, *He that believeth and is baptized ſhall be ſaved*, contain the ſum of the covenant? What doth God require of the ſoul, but believing in his Son (which includes repentance from the dead ſpirit and works), and receiving his baptiſm? To be baptized into him, into his death, into his life, into his nature, into his ſpirit; to take up his croſs, to bear his yoke, to be circumciſed in him and by him, that he may love the Lord his God with all his heart, that the power, virtue, and life of love may conſtrain him to live wholly in and to God. And then doth not the promiſe of ſalvation to him that believeth and is baptized into Chriſt contain writing the law in the heart, putting the fear into the heart; putting the Spirit within to become the teacher, guide, ſtrength, and comforter, and whatſoever elſe is neceſſary to the ſoul in the way to the kingdom?

Query 9. How is God merciful to men's iniquities, and remembers their ſins no more? Is it not in the covenant, and according to the covenant? Is there not a warfare to be accompliſhed before the ſoul come to witneſs the perfect blotting out of ſin? Is not Chriſt the Mediator, the judge to whom all judgment is committed? And doth not he judge his people for their tranſgreſſions again the law of his Spirit and life? And muſt not the ſoul, who will witneſs the days of refreſhment, and the perfect blotting out

of

of ſin therein, wait upon the Lord in the way of his judgments, even till ſin be judged and brought under, and God's righteouſneſs perfectly revealed? Under Moſes's law every tranſgreſſion received a juſt recompence of reward, and ſhall he eſcape in the goſpel who grieves the Spirit, who deſpiſes the Son, and gives ear to the enemy? Nay, nay; the ſame covenant that holds forth mercy to the tender broken-hearted, to the believing, to the obedient, contains alſo righteous judgment againſt the tranſgreſſor of this covenant. Yea, judgment begins at the houſe of God, and ceaſeth not till that ceaſe which judgment is to. The Lord ſhall judge his people; ſhall not Chriſt judge his own family? Yes, yes; they that are of the family, and in the true ſenſe, feel the Lord pleading with whatever is contrary to him in them, and they can rejoice therein, and ſing of mercy and judgment, after the Lord hath done his work in them, and brought forth the quiet fruit of righteouſneſs in their hearts thereby.

Bleſſed is he that experienceth theſe things, witneſſing that from the Lord which preſerveth out of all miſtakes and deceits about them.

AN

A N

ENQUIRY after TRUTH and RIGHTEOUSNESS,

AND

After the People whom the LORD eſtabliſheth, and will eſtabliſh therein;

In ſome QUERIES on ISAIAH lviii. and alſo on Chap. liv.

Query 1. ARE there any people to be found who exceed the ſtate ſpoken of in *ver.* 2. of ſeeking God daily, and delighting to know his ways, as a nation that did righteouſneſs, and forſook not the ordinance of their God? They aſk of me, ſaid the Lord, the ordinances of juſtice; they take delight in approaching to God. Are there not many profeſſions and ſorts of profeſſors at this day, who in God's ſight fall ſhort of this ſtate, and yet think highly of themſelves? Yet theſe the prophet of the Lord was not to ſpare; but to lift up his voice like a trumpet againſt them, becauſe of their tranſgreſſion and ſin which they committed, notwithſtanding their thus daily ſeeking the Lord.

Query 2. What was the tranſgreſſion and the ſins which the prophet was not to ſpare them in, but lift up his voice like a trumpet againſt them for? Was it not (among other things) for their wrong faſting, their wrong afflicting their ſouls, their wrong ſeeking of God, out of the meek, tender, merciful ſpirit? Doth God require ſuch faſting or praying of any man? Or will the Lord accept ſuch faſting or praying at any man's hand? Ah! how many faſt and pray at this day, who never rightly conſidered, nor truly underſtood, what the faſtings, and what the prayers are which God requireth, and which alone he will accept!

Query 3. What is the faſt which God requireth, and will accept in all ages? Is not this it, *To looſe the bands of wickedneſs, to undo the heavy burdens, to let the oppreſſed go free; to break every yoke?* &c. *ver.* 6, 7. Who can underſtand or learn this faſt but he that is taught of God?

Query 4. Are there any whoſe light breaks forth as the morning, and whoſe health ſprings forth ſpeedily, and whoſe righteouſneſs goeth before them, and whom the glory of the Lord gathereth up, or is a reward to

(as is promiſed to thoſe who obſerve this faſt), and whom the Lord is ready to hear and anſwer in all that they call upon him for, as *ver.* 8, 9.? Doth not God teach his children in the new covenant to obſerve this faſt? And they who are taught by him to keep it (and do faithfully keep it), do they not inherit this promiſe?

Query 5. Are there any now among the ſons of men, whoſe light hath riſen in obſcurity, and whoſe darkneſs hath become as noon-day? Whom the Lord guideth continually, and whoſe ſoul he ſatisfieth in droughts, and makes fat their bones; and makes them like a watered garden, and like a ſpring of water, whoſe waters fail not? Surely if there be any, who are truly taught of the Lord to obſerve that which leads hereto, they cannot miſs of enjoying theſe precious promiſes; for he is faithful and true who hath promiſed, *ver.* 10, 11.

Query 6. Are there any at this day, whom God honoureth in building the old waſte places, in raiſing up the foundations of many generations; in repairing the breach, and reſtoring the paths to dwell in? What are the paths that are to be dwelt in? Are they not the ſame which the ſoul is to walk in? Is not the juſt man's path and his dwelling-place all one, even the light of the living, which he is both to walk and abide in? See 1 *John* i. 7. and *Prov.* iv. 18.

It is ſaid concerning Chriſt, *He that ſaith he abideth in him, ought himſelf alſo ſo to walk, even as he walked*, 1 John ii. 6. How did Chriſt walk? Did he not walk in the light of God's Spirit? In ſubjection to God's Spirit? Was not the fulneſs given him? Was not the Father always with him? And did not he act in the Father, and the Father in and through him? Now, doth not he give forth a meaſure of the ſame Spirit, of the ſame anointing, of the ſame power to become ſons, unto all his? and are not they to walk according to the meaſure of light and life they receive from him? And he that walks according to this rule, can he err in ſo walking? Is not this the pure path, the living path, the path for the ranſomed in the days of the goſpel, who walk not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit; not in the oldneſs of the letter, but in the newneſs of the Spirit? Oh! that men could conſider this with the true underſtanding, and know the way of life in the true ſenſe and experience thereof! That which enlightens and gives life to my ſoul, is ſomewhat from Chriſt, even a meaſure or appearance of his pure Spirit; it is no leſs: and the law of life written inwardly is more to the ſoul than words written outwardly, though all the words that ever come from God's Holy Spirit are very precious, and greatly uſeful, to thoſe to whom he vouchſafeth to give the underſtanding of them.

Query 7. What is the ſabbath ſpoken of, *ver.* 13.? Is it the law-ſabbath, or the goſpel-ſabbath? Is it inferior in nature to the faſt before-mentioned? What is God's holy day, which is the ſoul's delight, the holy of the

the Lord, honourable, wherein the ſoul's that enter into the true reſt (by faith in him who is life) honour the Lord, in ceaſing from their own ways, pleaſures, and words? See alſo *Heb.* iv. 3. and 10.

Query 8. They that keep God's holy ſabbath, do they not delight themſelves in the Lord? Do they not feel the pleaſure of his day, and of his appearance in his day? Are not theſe of the true ſeed of Jacob (who prevail with the Lord for the bleſſing)? And doth not the Lord feed them with the heritage of Jacob their Father, even with the bleſſing of the covenant of life and peace for evermore.

SOME

QUERIES

ON

ISAIAH LIV.

Query 1. IS there ſuch a ſtate to be witneſſed, either in the particular, or in the general, wherein the womb that was barren ſhall travail and bear, and ſing for joy of heart and ſpirit before the Lord? See *ver.* 1.

Query 2. Is there ſuch a ſtate to be witneſſed, as of the Maker to become the huſband? Is not this a glorious ſtate indeed, and a name better than of ſons and daughters, ſignifying nearer intimacy and union than any other relation with the Holy One, the redeemer of Iſrael? And do not ſuch as come to this ſtate (even to be married to the Lamb), partake more abundantly of his redeeming power and holy preſence? See *ver.* 6.

Query 3. Are there ſome ſo viſited and redeemed by the Lord, as that they ſhall never be caſt off more, as that the floods of wrath ſhall never overtake them more, nor the covenant of their peace be removed? Ah! precious ſtate! Bleſſed are they doubtleſs, who have been ſo viſited and redeemed by God's mercy, as to be made partakers of it.

Query 4. Who is this that hath been afflicted, toſſed with tempeſt, and not comforted? Have there been any ſuch in our days, who have been deeply afflicted, for want of the preſence of the Lord God of their life, who have been toſſed up and down with tempeſt after tempeſt, and could meet with no comforter to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to their weary ſouls? And

hath the Lord appeared to theſe, viſited theſe, built upon theſe, comforted theſe? Surely then, the poor whom he hath raiſed out of the duſt, and the needy whom he hath lifted off from the dunghill, cannot but praiſe his name.

Query 5. Who is this, whoſe ſtones God lays with fair colours, and her foundation with ſaphires? Whoſe windows God makes of agates, and her gates of carbuncles, and all her borders of pleaſant ſtones? Was not the covenant of life ſo adorned in the apoſtles days? And is ſhe not ſo adorned now again?

Query 6. Whoſe children are they, who ſhall be all taught of the Lord, and whoſe peace ſhall be great, who ſhall be eſtabliſhed in righteouſneſs, who ſhall be far from oppreſſion, ſo that they ſhall not fear; and from terror, ſo that it ſhall not come near them? Are there ſuch a generation of the heavenly birth, of the covenant of life, brought forth in this our day, who ſanctify the Lord of hoſts himſelf, and make him their fear and their dread, but are not terrified with the wicked one, nor with the ſnares and engines of the ungodly? Surely they who are taught of God, have peace from him and in him, and are eſtabliſhed in the righteous ſpirit and life of his Son; they are like Mount Sion, which cannot be ſhaken or removed, by all the terrors and oppreſſing devices of the ungodly.

Query 7. By whom do they gather together, who gather together againſt ſuch a people? Certainly it is not by the Lord, nor by any advice or counſel from him; but by the advice of that ſpirit which oppoſeth himſelf againſt the power and work of the Lord: and that ſpirit muſt fall for the ſakes of thoſe whom God hath raiſed up by his power, and undertaketh to defend. How tender was God of Iſrael after the fleſh in the day of his delivering them! See 1 *Chron.* xvi. 19, *&c.* And will he not be as tender of his ſpiritual Iſrael, in the day of his redeeming and delivering them? Indeed the oppoſition will be very great, but conſider who ſhall have the victory, ſee *Rev.* xvii. 14. Certainly it is true, and ſealed by the Spirit of the Lord, that patience, meekneſs, innocency, love, righteouſneſs, *&c.* ſhall at length overcome all unrighteouſneſs, enmity, oppreſſion, cruelty, wrath, *&c.* and that ſpirit from which they proceed; and as they are overcome, and when they are overcome, the Lamb's Spirit ſhall reign and ſhine in the glory of the Father. Oh! the ſweet ſenſe of this day, and further hope thereof; how doth it bear up the ſuffering lambs, in the midſt of all their trials and tribulations!

Query 8. Hath not God created the waſter to deſtroy? and hath not he power over him? And doth not he limit him in the midſt of his deſtroying work? But did God create him to deſtroy his heritage? Or will God ſuffer him ſo to do? They may indeed deſtroy the buildings which are not of God; but God is the wiſe, great maſter-builder, who counted his coſt before he began,

began, and knew he was able to maintain his building, againſt all the oppoſitions and oppoſers, which could riſe up againſt it.

Query 9. Can any weapon formed againſt the covenant of life, and the children thereof, who are taught of God, and have peace from him, and who are eſtabliſhed by him in righteouſneſs; I ſay, can any weapon formed againſt theſe, proſper? Every tongue that riſeth up in judgment againſt them, doth not the holy tongue condemn? Is not this the heritage of the ſervants of the Lord, in this our day? And doth not the Lord ſay (whatever men ſay to the contrary) that their righteouſneſs is of him? Indeed, whoever receiveth the true righteouſneſs, receiveth it from the hand of the Lord, and knoweth it to be of him.

And this teſtimony we have, even from the Spirit of the Lord, who taketh away our unrighteouſneſs and filthy garments, and giveth us righteouſneſs from and in his Son's righteouſneſs, even the very ſame wherewith the Son himſelf was cloathed. For as the ſeed is but one, and of one, *Heb.* ii. 11. ſo the righteouſneſs is but one neither. Be not haſty in ſpirit, but wait to underſtand in the light and Spirit of the Lord, which is wiſdom's place of giving true underſtanding to her diſciples.

It is true, there hath been great darkneſs, and the true church hath been in the wilderneſs, and the remnant of her ſeed hunted and perſecuted up and down the earth by the falſe church, which hath been cried up for the true. But, bleſſed be the Lord, the darkneſs is paſſing away, and the true light ſhining again; which light diſcovers and redeems out of all that is falſe, into that which is true; ſo that he that is truth, and no lye, is again known, and he ſpeaketh truth and no lye, and he anointeth with the true and holy oil of life and ſalvation, all that are truly living. And now the kingdom of darkneſs is going down, and the kingdom of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt raiſing up and exalting; which is an inward kingdom, a ſpiritual kingdom, a kingdom of life, a kingdom of peace, a kingdom of righteouſneſs, a kingdom of holy power and dominion over ſin and death in the heart. And this will ſpread and increaſe, to the bleſſing of perſons, families, and nations (as they come to be ſenſible of, and ſubject to the holy light and power thereof), with the bleſſings of Abraham, wherewith all families and nations are to be bleſſed, as they come to be unleavened from the ſerpentine ſpirit and wiſdom, and leavened with the innocency and righteouſneſs of the Lamb's nature and Spirit.

The mighty God carry on his work, by the ſame mighty arm of ſtrength wherewith he began it; and open the eyes of this nation, that they may ſee their proper hope and intereſt; for indeed the Lord hath great love to this nation, and bleſſing in ſtore for it (for the ſeed's ſake which he hath ſown and cauſed to ſpring up in it); though many trials and tribulations muſt firſt be paſſed through, and the Spirit of enmity and oppoſition againſt

againſt the appearance of God's Holy Spirit and power worn out. Oh! that men could come to that which gives the eye-ſight, that thereby they might ſee a-right, and no longer take the riſe of their ſeeing from that ſpirit and wiſdom, which miſrepreſents things.

Written in Reading-Goal, in the tender love, true innocency, and uprightneſs of my heart; which the Lord hath given me to ſuffer with for his Truth's ſake; about the latter end of the 4th Month, 1671.

ISAAC PENINGTON.

THE

THE HOLY TRUTH and PEOPLE DEFENDED;

And ſome of the

WEAPONS and STRENGTH OF THE POWER of DARKNESS, Broken and Scattered,

BY THE

LIGHT and POWER of TRUTH.

IN AN

ANSWER,

TO THE

Chief Paſſages in a LETTER, written to me, and replied to by me, before my Impriſonment in this Place.

Where I have been a Priſoner above a Year and a Half, without any Law broken, or Cauſe given on my Part; who only came Innocently and Peaceably to Viſit my Friends in Priſon.

By me ISAAC PENINGTON,

Priſoner for the TESTIMONY OF TRUTH (for could I have denied TRUTH, I might have avoided the SNARE), at Reading-Goal.

The Bows of the Mighty are broken; and they that ſtumbled, are girt with Strength, 1 SAM. ii. 4.

THE

PREFACE.

A LETTER was ſent me from a dear friend of mine (bearing date the Fifth of the Eleventh Month, 1671.), who had long been greatly diſtreſſed, and could not find relief in the way of her former profeſſion and church-fellowſhip; for whom I greatly travailed with the Lord, and towards whom my ſpirit was made very tender by him. I ſtill felt the ſeal of God's love and mercy towards her, even in her loweſt condition, deepeſt deſpair, and foreſt captivity, through her great and manifold temptations; and my teſtimony to her at times, from the Lord, on this behalf, was ſometimes of uſe to her, to bear up her ſpirit, till the day of God's viſiting and redeeming her, with the virtue and healing power of his ſalvation; which, bleſſed be his name, ſhe hath ſince had ſweet experience of, and true peace and joy in knowing the true head, holding him in the faith, and being held by him.

Now, this letter of an antient acquaintance of mine, which I had anſwered long ago, one that belonged to Sir Henry Vane (as ſhe ſignified in her letter to me) deſired ſhe ſhould ſee; which is ſaid to be an anſwer to a letter of mine. If my anſwer had gone along with it, I ſhould have took no further notice of it; but it going without my anſwer, leſt it ſhould do hurt to thoſe to whom the Lord hath done or is doing good, I am engaged in ſpirit to reply ſomewhat to it, and to give forth to others what the Lord giveth in to me, upon this new occaſion. How greatly, truly, and purely I have loved the man, I will not boaſt (the Lord knoweth, with whoſe knowledge herein I am content): but, oh! that this his paper might not be laid to his charge at the great day! which (I am afraid) it will, unleſs he repent of it; for, indeed, it is not a fruit of life from God's Holy Spirit; but of the growth of Egypt and Babylon.

It was ſent me in the form of a book, as if it had been ſent abroad for ſpecial ſervice. There was no name at it, as if it were an arrow to fly in the

the dark, and wound ſecretly: but no weapon, formed againſt the Iſrael of God ſhall proſper, either from this hand, or any other; and every tongue that riſeth up againſt them to judgment will God condemn. This is the heritage of the deſpiſed people and ſervants of the living God in this our day; whoſe righteouſneſs is the righteouſneſs of his Son beſtowed upon them, wherewith he himſelf hath cloathed them, as the anointed eye now ſeeth, and all eyes ſhall one day ſee, and tongues confeſs, to the glory of God the Father.

THE HOLY TRUTH and PEOPLE DEFENDED.

HE excepteth againſt thoſe words of mine to him in a former letter (of *Jan* 24. which I have not here by me), That when his eyes are opened by the Lord, he ſhall then acknowledge that we oppoſe no truths of the Lord, but hold forth what we have received from him.

To which he thus replieth, *Is redemption by Chriſt's blood no truth of the Lord's?* Which he chargeth one of us in particular, and many others in general, with denying.

Anſw. We are gathered into that, and abide in that, in which no truth can be denied; and are in him that leadeth into all truth, and teacheth to deny no truth, that ever was held forth by the Spirit of the Lord. Some of us may not yet be grown up in underſtanding into the myſteries of the kingdom, which God hath revealed and made manifeſt to others; but yet we do not deny, but own one another in our ſeveral meaſures of knowledge and ſenſe of things, and in our ſeveral growths. And we own and acknowledge, in God's ſight, the ſeveral diſpenſations he hath brought forth, both before the law, and under the law and prophets, and in the time of Chriſt's appearance in the fleſh; and after, when he ſent his Spirit, and all the time the church was in the wilderneſs, and now ſhe is coming forth again, in the brightneſs and glory of the Father, looking fair as the morning, clear as the ſun, terrible as an army with banners. Nor do we diſown any thing that is of God in the profeſſors of this age; but only that which we know, and are required by him to teſtify againſt, as being not of him. Oh! that they could weigh our words and teſtimony in a right Spirit! for they would not then be ſo offended at, and ſpeak ſo againſt us, as now they do. And the Lord knoweth we would do any thing that lieth in us to remove the ſtumbling-blocks that lie before them; but it cannot be done to that ſpirit in them, before which God Almighty hath laid the ſtumbling-block, that it might ſtumble, and fall, and be ſnared, and broken, and taken. But if they could come into another Spirit, and feel unity with, and the birth of, another Spirit, the birth of that pure wiſdom ſhould find no ſtumbling-

ſtumbling-block or offence in this precious diſpenſation of truth, wherewith God from on high hath viſited us.

And as for denying *redemption by the blood of Chriſt*, oh! how will he anſwer this charge to God, when none upon the earth (as the Lord God knoweth) are ſo taught, and do ſo rightly and fully own redemption by the blood of Chriſt, as the Lord hath taught us to do! for we own the blood of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, both outwardly and inwardly; both as it was ſhed on the croſs, and as it is ſprinkled in our conſciences; and know the cleanſing virtue thereof in the everlaſting covenant, and in the light which is eternal; out of which light men have but a notion thereof, but do not truly know nor own it. And let him conſider, before the time of antichriſt, it was a great matter to know and own Chriſt outwardly, as he appeared in that body; but ſince the antichriſtian ſpirit hath got that, the diſtinguiſhing knowledge and owning of Chriſt is, to know and own him inwardly. The outward knowledge and confeſſion now (as it is generally ſeparated from, and held forth in way of diſtinction from the inward) is but the knowledge and confeſſion of Babylon, and not the true living knowledge and confeſſion of Chriſt, in and by the Spirit of the Father, which is the knowledge and confeſſion of all the children of the true and heavenly mother, which is the mother of all that are born of the Spirit.

He repeateth thoſe words of mine, *That we do not make any finite thing our righteouſneſs; but Chriſt of God is made unto us righteouſneſs. This*, he ſaith, *is well ſpoken, and wiſheth we may always abide in this confeſſion.*

Anſw. Theſe words aroſe in me from an inward feeling of him who giveth righteouſneſs, and of the righteouſneſs given; and the Lord preſerving me in that life, I ſhall feel ſo for ever, and confeſs ſo for ever. And truly I can teſtify of no other righteouſneſs; for, bleſſed be the name of my God, I feel the righteouſneſs of his Son revealed in me daily, from faith to faith. In his name I have been gathered, in his name I live, and in him I feel righteouſneſs; and indeed there is nothing but righteouſneſs, holineſs, truth, life, and ſalvation (and the like) in him.

And he that is truly in him, is righteous and holy in him; there being in him a new creating of all that are there, and a renewing into the holy and heavenly image, which conſiſts in the righteouſneſs and holineſs of truth.

He deſireth me to give a plain anſwer to this queſtion:

Is Chriſt of God made our righteouſneſs by faith in his blood, or in his Spirit?

Anſw. A pretended faith in Chriſt's blood, without faith in his Spirit, is but dead and notional. *Except ye eat my fleſh, and drink my blood* (ſaith Chriſt) *ye have no life in you. It is the Spirit that quickeneth: the fleſh* (ſaith he) *profiteth nothing.* Now the faith muſt be in that which quickeneth, and the faith in that which quickeneth is holy and righteous, and the man who is found in it is juſtified, through that faith in the quickening power,

in the ſight of God. Thus Abraham was juſtified in the ſight of God; and thus are the children of Abraham to be juſtified, even through believing in that holy power and Spirit which requireth obedience, and juſtifieth the obedient, and condemneth the diſobedient for ever, *Rom.* iv. 24.

He ſaith, *He fears a ſnake in this green graſs, when I ſay, From his life, virtue, and power revealed in us, is our conformity to him.*

Anſw. It were better and ſafer for him to fear at home; for the ſnake is in his own graſs, and many notional, high, ſoaring expreſſions, without true knowledge. But can there be any conformity to Chriſt without his life, virtue, and power inwardly revealed? What elſe can conform unto, and bring forth in, the image and likeneſs of Chriſt?

He ſaith, *He feareth leſt I make this life and virtue our righteouſneſs, which is indeed the fruits of it.*

Anſw. Who is this that darkeneth counſel by words without knowledge, and runneth out from the truth into his own imaginations? What was Chriſt's righteouſneſs? Was it not the life, the virtue, the Spirit of the Father in him, he being one with it, in the faith of it, and in the obedience to it? And is not the righteouſneſs of the head and the body the ſame, communicated from the head to the body? Are they not all of one, and the righteouſneſs one and the ſame in both? So much of Chriſt's Spirit, ſo much of his righteouſneſs; and out of his Spirit, out of his righteouſneſs for evermore. For the righteouſneſs of the Son is revealed, and communicated from faith to faith, in his Spirit; and ſo Chriſt is indeed made righteouſneſs to them that are found in his Spirit; and they are covered with the garment of righteouſneſs and ſalvation, who are covered with his Spirit.

He ſaith, *Our righteouſneſs is before this.*

Anſw. What! Is our righteouſneſs before any of the life, virtue, and power of Chriſt revealed in us? Is God a reſpecter of perſons? Doth he juſtify any out of the holy covenant before he hath made a change in him? How doth this man, with his vain imaginations, turn the whole way and counſel of God upſide-down?

He brings a ſcripture to prove this, *The ſpirit is life for righteouſneſs ſake.*

Anſw. That ſcripture (which is *Rom.* viii. 10.) ſpeaks of thoſe in whom Chriſt is and dwells; and there indeed *the body is dead becauſe of ſin, and the ſpirit is life becauſe of righteouſneſs.* This is plainly ſpoken, and plainly felt and known as it is ſpoken. Oh! that he had the true ſenſe and underſtanding of it as it is in Jeſus!

He ſaith, *Righteouſneſs is in order of nature before ſanctification.*

Anſw. That which is holy is righteous; there is nothing righteous in the eyes of the pure God but that which is holy. The head was really holy and righteous, and they that are in him partake of his holineſs and righteouſneſs, and are really holy and righteous in him; and faith, which purifies the

the heart, and through which ſanctification is, muſt needs be in order of nature before the juſtification which is by it; for God juſtifieth no unbelievers, but believers only. Yea, the wicked muſt forſake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and turn unto the Lord; which cannot poſſibly be without ſome degree of ſanctification, before the Lord will have mercy, and pardon the ſoul its ſins, *Iſa.* lv. 7. and *chap.* i. 16, 17, 18.

He ſaith, *Juſtification is an act of grace paſſed upon us by God freely, without reſpect to us as godly; nay, properly reflecting on us in that moment as ungodly.*

Anſw. I charge this in the ſight of God for abſolutely falſe doctrine, and contrary to the goſpel. For God juſtifieth no man as ungodly; but calleth upon men to repent, and turn from their ungodlineſs, and he will have mercy upon them, juſtify and ſave them. Now men are not ungodly in turning from their ungodlineſs, but changed; and ſo their ſtate is in ſome meaſure changed before juſtified. If Abraham was ungodly when God called him; yet in forſaking his own country, and following the Lord, and offering up his Son, he was obedient, and not ungodly, and in that obedience he was juſtified. A man may have notions of juſtification in his mind, and accordingly take himſelf to be juſtified, when he is not; but there is no man juſtified by the Lord till he be changed, tranſlated into him in whom God juſtifieth, out of the place of condemnation into the place of juſtification. For till men are changed by the Spirit and power of the Lord, they are but darkneſs, and in the darkneſs, where no juſtification is. It is the believing, the obedient, the children of light, that are juſtified by the Lord.

He ſaith, *Were we godly before or at that time, it were no act of grace to pronounce us righteous.*

Anſw. He that witneſſeth ſalvation in Chriſt Jeſus, witneſſeth it to be a continued act of grace. Grace appears to the ſoul, grace teacheth, grace enableth, grace maketh a change from the ungraciouſneſs of the heart and ſtate; and then grace (or God by his grace in and through Jeſus Chriſt) forgiveth the ſins that were committed before. For though the Lord viſit me with life, quicken me thereby, make a change in my heart and ſtate; yet it is his mercy to accept me, and to paſs by for his name's ſake my former debts and treſpaſſes againſt him. Alas! the new covenant is wholly a covenant of grace and mercy; and the giving of Chriſt, drawing the mind to him, accepting and juſtifying in him, are works of grace and mercy towards his. So the ſpiritual Iſrael may well ſing this ſong in the land of holineſs and redemption, *O praiſe the Lord! for he is good, and his mercy endureth for ever.* I can truly ſet my ſeal to this thing; that the more holy and righteous the Lord maketh me in his Son, the more ſenſible am I of his love, grace, and mercy, in juſtifying of me; and it is precious to me to witneſs juſtification and acceptance with him in and through his Son.

He

He ſaith further, *But this is the bounty, the freeneſs, the munificence, the riches of the grace of God, to call things that are not as though they were.*

Anſw. Take heed of abuſing that ſcripture. God ſent Chriſt to renew, to redeem, to change, to make holy and righteous, to make people ſuch as the Father might be pleaſed with, accept, and juſtify; and as Chriſt maketh them ſo, the Father receiveth and accepteth them as ſuch. But God doth diſtinguiſh and call things as they are. He doth not call an ungodly man an holy man, a juſtified man; but when he hath changed him, new-created him in Chriſt Jeſus, took him out of his old ſtock, and planted him into the new; then he accounteth and calleth him ſo, and not before. It were better for men to wait upon God to underſtand what his Spirit meant in what he ſpake, than to put formed meanings of their own upon his words.

He wreſts my words, charging and reproving me, as if I ſaid, *The love of God was a bare thing.*

Anſw. Thoſe were not my words, nor did my words ſo ſignify; but my words were, That it is not by bare loving (or mere loving, or only loving) that God makes a man righteous; which is very true and manifeſt: for there is, beſides his love (in and through that love) the ſending of his Son, and revealing of his Son, drawing to and tranſplanting into his Son, to make holy and righteous in him. For holineſs, though it may be diſtinguiſhed, yet it cannot be divided from righteouſneſs; nor can a man poſſibly be righteous in God's ſight, unleſs he be alſo holy in ſome meaſure. His reflecting words hereupon I paſs by, though very unjuſtly and unchriſtianly caſt upon me (without any juſt occaſion given him by words) which I deſire the Lord may make him ſenſible of, that he may be forgiven it.

He blameth me for ſaying, We make no finite thing our righteouſneſs; and yet he ſaith, *We make the meaſure of the Spirit (which each member of Chriſt receives) our righteouſneſs.*

Anſw. A meaſure hath the ſame nature with the fulneſs. A meaſure of the Spirit and life, of the grace and truth which comes from Jeſus Chriſt, hath the ſame nature that the fulneſs hath. All the life, all the new creation that comes from him, and dwells in him, is righteous, and found righteous where-ever it is found. Yet I do not remember that we have thus expreſſed it, that that meaſure is our righteouſneſs; but it is he who is the fulneſs, who is revealed in that meaſure; and it is he who is our righteouſneſs, our wiſdom, our ſanctification, our redemption; but it is in the holy pure meaſure of the heavenly gift that he is made thus of God to us, not out of it.

He ſaith, *The Lord our righteouſneſs redeems us, not properly by the life and Spirit of his Godhead; though that was in the work, ſupporting, enabling him, and carrying him up, in that great undertaking; but by the death and ſufferings of his manhood.*

Anſw.

Anſw. This is ſtrange doctrine, to make the manhood the main Redeemer, and the life and Spirit of the Godhead but the ſupporter and carrier up of the man in the work of redemption; whereas it was the Word which created all, which alſo redeemed; he that left his glory, and made himſelf of no reputation, but came in the form of a ſervant, to do the will. It was the Spirit and life of the Father (even the eternal Son) which took up that body, appeared in that body, offered it up a pure and acceptable ſacrifice to the Father, finiſhing the work therein which the Father gave him to do, *John* xvii. 4, 5.

He ſaith, *Shall we think to anſwer the law by our obedience?*

Anſw. We do not look upon the law of Moſes, which was given to the Jew outward, to be the diſpenſation of the new covenant, or to be the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus; but thoſe who are in the new covenant, and have God's law written in their hearts, and his fear put there, which preſerveth from departing from him, and his Spirit put within them, to cauſe them to walk in his ways, and to keep his ſtatutes and judgments, and do them; and who live in the Spirit, and walk not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit, the righteouſneſs of the law is fulfilled in theſe. Yet they do not magnify and cry up their own obedience (nor call it their righteouſneſs) but him from whom their obedience comes. For in the meaſure of his grace and living truth the ſoul is one with him; and all that he is, and all that he hath done, is theirs; and it is he himſelf that is the righteouſneſs of all that are in him: and they that abide in him partake of his righteouſneſs from day to day, which floweth in like a ſtream upon them.

I wiſh he could conſider in what ſpirit it is that he calls the white ſtone a ticket for the righteouſneſs. Doth he know the white ſtone with the new name? It is no leſs than the foundation-ſtone, than the righteouſneſs itſelf; and what doth he talk of bringing that as a ticket for the righteouſneſs?

He ſeemeth to paſs by ſome things (which I ſpeak in tender love and weightineſs of ſpirit to him) as the judgment of man in his day; but let him take heed, when he comes to appear before God, he then find it was the judgment of God's Spirit in the light of his day; which day is inward and ſpiritual, which believers are to haſten to, and which approacheth in every heart, as the night ſpendeth and paſſeth away. And all true Chriſtians and believers ought to wait for the paſſing away of the night, and the dawning of this day, and the ariſing of the day-ſtar in their hearts.

He ſaith, *Chriſt is now ready to be revealed.*

Anſw. I believe he is to be revealed further, and in fuller glory; but he is truly already revealed as the Saviour, ſhepherd, and biſhop of the ſoul; and many are gathered home to their reſting-place in him, which, while they were ſcattered up and down upon the barren mountains (before the ſhepherd appeared and made himſelf manifeſt) they could not find.

He

He ſeems to ſtrike at the peace and joy which is of God, and to give it a daſh, *Becauſe minds eſtranged from the enlightnings and convictions of God, have much peace in their ways, and ſuch are under deluſions.*

Anſw. We do not tell men of the peace and joy we have in our God boaſtingly; but in a faithful way of teſtimony concerning, and invitation to, what we once wanted, but now have found, under the leadings of the true Shepherd. And the peace and joy which he gives, is an evidence and aſſurance in the hearts of thoſe to whom it is given by him. And they that have been greatly diſtreſſed for want of the Lord, and his powerful arm of ſalvation, having met with it, it riſeth up from life in them to teſtify and ſay to others, *Lo! this is our God, we have waited for him, and we will be glad and rejoice in his ſalvation.* And oh! that ye alſo were ſtripped of this dead, notional, comprehenſive knowledge concerning the Saviour! That ye might meet with the Saviour himſelf, and receive that knowledge from him which is life eternal. And this, with the true peace and joy thereof from him, ye would find no deluſion.

He ſpeaketh, *Of ſuffering loſs, and of phraſes and expreſſions: Better* (ſaid he) *to ſuffer loſs in theſe, than themſelves to be deſtroyed.*

Anſw. Let him apply this home. Oh! that he ſaw how thoſe phraſes and expreſſions, and imaginary knowledge, which he hath brought forth in this letter, ſtands in his way to hinder the true knowledge; and that he cannot poſſibly receive the true knowledge without being emptied of theſe, and parting with them for the excellency of the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jeſus; and without the true knowledge of Jeſus men cannot but periſh, and be overtaken with deſtruction.

Then for being helpful to eſtabliſh perſons in grace.

Anſw. Such kind of doctrines as theſe do not tend thereto.

They may eſtabliſh men in ſuch a notion of grace as he hath formed; but they neither tend to lead to, nor eſtabliſh in, the grace itſelf, but keep men from it. Nay, I can truly ſay it from him that is true, that he himſelf cannot receive the grace, the thing itſelf, till he part with theſe notions. And oh! that he might know the ſtone cut out of the mountain without hands to daſh his image! that the Living One (who gives life) might be received by him, in that meaſure of grace and truth which he inwardly diſpenſes to all that travel out of the darkneſs of their own imaginations and conceivings upon the ſcriptures into his pure light.

The main reaſon he giveth why he is not ſatisfied with that which I ſent him, concerning the ſum and ſubſtance of the true religion, is; becauſe it fights with his notions, even a ſtating of our righteouſneſs with God, according to his imagination; which is abſolutely a meer dream, which he hath dreamt of in the night, and not ſeen in the light of the day. For the cry of the Spirit of the Lord is in the goſpel-day; *Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation, which keepeth the truth, may enter in.* This is the truth, as God hath revealed by his own Spirit, in this our day; but to ſay this ſpeaks

of

of our ſtate in him, without witneſſing it in ourſelves, is but a meer dream; and men cannot bring forth fruit to God, nor be lovely and pleaſing in his eyes, but as their fallow ground is ploughed up, the thorns, thiſtles, briars, and that which is unclean and unholy, removed.

Chriſt, he ſaith, *is the heavenly man, and manſion in whom we are thus bleſſed, and in whom we ſit down in a ſtate of reſt and reconciliation, heavenly and divine, before and without the conſideration of any works of righteouſneſs which we have wrought*, &c.

Anſw. If he means this concerning the full ſitting down in reſt; it is directly contrary to ſcripture. For none ſit down in that full reſt, before and without conſideration of works of righteouſneſs wrought by them. For that great judgment is a time of rendering to every man according to his works. Reſt is the reward of the traveller, and his travels are not deſpiſed, but conſidered in his reward. Mark; every one that improved the talent, had a reward from his Lord. *And come ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you: for I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat*, &c. *Matt.* xxv. And the apoſtle is of the ſame mind with Chriſt, when he ſaith, *It is a righteous thing with God, to recompence tribulation to them that trouble you, and to you reſt*, &c. 2 *Theſ.* i. 6, 7. So that perſons do not ſit down in eternal bleſſedneſs in Chriſt, before or without conſideration of any works wrought by them.

And then for ſitting down in an heavenly divine ſtate of righteouſneſs, reſt, and peace in him here; it is a glorious ſtate to be travelled to. There muſt be a tranſlating out of the kingdom of darkneſs, into the kingdom of the dear Son firſt. The kingdom muſt firſt be come, and the ſoul prepared to enter into it, at the gate which the Spirit opens to him in the way of the goſpel. For it is one thing to know ſomewhat of Chriſt, and to begin to become a diſciple; and another thing to learn of him ſo to deny a man's own wiſdom and will, as to come to receive and be born of that which is true and living of him; and to learn to wait aright for the opening of the gate, and entering into the kingdom and land of life, and to be prepared to ſit down with him.

For there is a ſtate of diſcipleſhip, wherein a man hardly knoweth a ſettlement, ſo much as how to watch with Chriſt rightly and conſtantly; but it is a great matter to be able to dwell and abide with him. None can do this, *but he that can dwell with devouring fire and everlaſting burnings*: for the pure word of life is a fire, and he that ſits down in the heavenly place in him, muſt ſit down in that fire.

This he reckons the firm ſtable ſtate, which indeed is no ſtate at all. There is not a ſtate in Chriſt without being in Chriſt; and then the ſtate is according to the ſoul's being in Chriſt: for then the work of regeneration, the work of ſanctification, the work of juſtifying, *&c.* goeth on; and a man is with God, according as he is framed and new created in Chriſt, and not otherwiſe. So that the life and power of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt is found

judging and condemning whatever is not of God; and juſtifying only what is of God in him. For the ſoul then comes into the new covenant, which requireth and juſtifieth that which is new, all that is wrought in God; and condemneth all that is wrought out of him. And ſo here is the true ſenſe and knowledge of ſin, by the new and pure law of the new covenant; and the advocate known, and repentance given by him upon all occaſions, to thoſe that wait upon him, and the ſprinkling of the blood, and the remiſſion upon repentance. This is the new living way of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which he hath conſecrated for all his (made known in the demonſtration of his Spirit) which will ſtand for ever; whereas mens apprehenſions about thoſe things, which they have gathered and comprehended of themſelves out of the ſcriptures (in the ſuppoſed light of their natural reaſon and underſtanding) are but dreams, and will vaniſh even in their own hearts, if ever the true light ariſe there.

He ſaith, *This ſtate can never fall, nor be finally fallen from.*

Anſw. There is a way of coming to Chriſt, and there is a way of preſervation in Chriſt. For there is a power that redeems; and men are preſerved by that power in ſubjection to it. And ſo every one, *that thinketh he ſtandeth, is to fear, and to take heed leſt he fall*; and not to boaſt and ſay, *I am in a ſtate of juſtification, which is firm and cannot be moved*; and it cannot fall, nor be finally fallen from. *For ye are kept by the power of God, through faith unto ſalvation.* Keep to the power which preſerves, *hold that faſt which thou haſt, let no man take thy crown.* Keep the faith, make not ſhipwreck of it, and of a good conſcience. Oh! that men knew the right doctrine and way of coming to Chriſt! which they cannot do, till they are taught of the Father, *John* vi. 45. and the right doctrine and way of ſtanding and abiding in him. For truly mens profeſſed coming to Chriſt, believing and ſtanding at this day, is generally notional, outward, without; but not in the inward life and power itſelf, without which no man can come to him, nor ſtand nor abide in him.

He chargeth us, *With ſetting up a covenant of works; always doing and never done; a covenant to be performed by us, for ourſelves; not by Chriſt for us.*

Anſw. I would he ſaw in the true light how unjuſt and untrue this charge is. For the Lord God of life knoweth that he himſelf hath taught us the new covenant, and thereby taught us to wait upon himſelf in his Son, to work all our works in us and for us; and this we daily experience, that we can work nothing, but as he works in us. Therefore our whole courſe is a waiting on him in ſtillneſs, to witneſs him appearing and doing all in us; and bleſſed be his name, we do not wait in vain. But if he think all works are excluded out of the new covenant, he greatly erreth; for the works of God's Spirit are required and have a place therein; and God and Chriſt (the King and Shepherd) is the judge of his people in the new covenant, and juſtifieth or condemneth according to the law thereof.

In

In the faith and obedience he juſtifieth; in the unbelief and diſobedience he condemns, without reſpect of perſons.

And it is a precious thing in the goſpel miniſtration to come to God the judge of all, and to witneſs true judgment ſet up by God in a man's own heart; that by the miniſtration of the pure judgment there, the ſoul may come to learn righteouſneſs, of the holy teacher and Shepherd, even the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who is juſt and faithful under his Father, in the impartial miniſtration of the new covenant.

Hereupon ſeveral charges he brings againſt us, through his own miſtakes and miſapprehenſions of us.

As, Firſt, *That our doctrine implies free will and power in the creature.*

Anſw. We have never experienced free will nor power, as of ourſelves, but as we have been turned to God's power, and received it from him; nor did we ever teſtify to others, that they could receive and embrace truth in their own will, and by their own power. Oh! that this perſon had true diſcerning of, and were ſevered from, that ſpirit which thus chargeth us! For whoever receives this teſtimony concerning the inward light of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, ſhall never find himſelf able to do any thing therein by his own will and power; but there witneſſeth God's begetting him out of his own will, by the life and power of truth.

Secondly, He chargeth it, *That it maketh the election of God altogether fruſtraneous.*

Anſw. Election of the ſeed, in the ſeed, it doth not at all make fruſtraneous; but mens wrong apprehenſions concerning election out of the ſeed, the true doctrine of election doth not conſiſt with. *He hath choſen us in him. So that in him*, to wit, in *Chriſt*, the choice is; and he that will *make his election ſure*, muſt make the *ſeed ſure to him*; growing in the nature thereof, wherein the election is to the truly obedient.

He ſaith, *Our righteouſneſs with God is the foundation.*

Anſw. But is there not ſomewhat, which is the foundation of our righteouſneſs with God? And can we be righteous with God, till we come to that foundation, and be made righteous by it? Muſt we not firſt believe in him? And is not faith a gift which comes from the holy root, and maketh a change in them in whom this gift is found? Doth not faith make a difference between them that believe, and *them that believe* not? So that, ſo ſoon as ever there is true faith, and it thus works, the *ſtate is changed*; and there is no juſtification before faith. For in the unbelief is the condemnation for ever. *He that believeth not, is condemned already.* And what! is he juſtified there too, at the ſame time? Was Abraham, our father, juſtified in the unbelief and diſobedience? Or in believing and obeying God? For what ſaith the ſcripture? *Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteouſneſs.*

That which I ſpoke of, he ſaith, *Is but the fruit and ſuperſtructure.*

Anſw. When Chriſt directs men to the ſeed of the kingdom, doth he direct unto the fruit and ſuperſtructure? I ſpoke there of the ſeed, of the light, of the holy Spirit, of the quickening virtue; is that the ſuperſtructure? Or is that the fruit of mens being made righteous? Nay; muſt they not turn to that, receive that, believe in that, even in the light of God's Spirit (for they are the true and right believers), before a man can come to be made righteous, or accounted righteous in the eyes of the Lord? For none are righteous, but in him; and all are out of him, till they be gathered into him.

He inſtanceth in one paſſage of mine (in a book intituled, "*The Sum or* "*Subſtance of our Religion, who are called* QUAKERS,"), the words are theſe: *This is the ſum of all, even to know and experience what is to be brought down into death, and kept in death; what to be brought up out of the grave, to live to God, and reign in his dominion; and what to be kept in ſubjection and obedience to him, who is to reign. Now, to experience it thus done in the heart, the fleſh brought down, the ſeed of life raiſed, and the ſoul ſubject to the pure heavenly power, whoſe right it is to reign in the heart, in and by the ſeed; this is a bleſſed ſtate indeed; for here the work is done,* &c. Theſe were my words.

Now mind; God is the teacher in the new covenant. Now he that hath learned this of him, hath he not learned the true religion? And is not this a full ſum and ſubſtance of religion? When the apoſtle ſaith, *Pure religion, and undefiled before God, is to viſit the fatherleſs,* &c. Alas! might this ſpirit have ſaid againſt the bleſſed apoſtle, that is not the pure religion (not the ſum or ſubſtance of pure and undefiled religion), that is but a fruit or ſuperſtructure! Oh! that men had true ſenſe and underſtanding! That they might ſavour the words that come from God's Spirit, and the words that come from their own ſpirit; and might not be offended at that which is true, pure, and living of him.

But having diſliked this ſum, he giveth one of his own, in theſe words following: *I ſay, the ſum, and that which firſt and mainly imports us to know, as the Lord hath taught me, is, That the old man is crucified with Chriſt, and brought down into his grave, and that we are riſen together with him, by the faith of the operation of God; and from this faith to be working with God, to mortify our members that are on the earth.*

Anſw. Doth not Chriſt ſend his apoſtles to preach the goſpel, and give them this meſſage, *That God is light*; and to turn their minds to the true light, that they might be enlightned by it? Doth it not import men firſt to know that, whereby they might be crucified, before they can know themſelves crucified thereby? So that Chriſt did judge this as the firſt thing neceſſary to be known in the preaching of the goſpel; and bid men preach the light, and turn men to the light, and to the inward appearance and voice of God's word in their hearts. And what! are men riſen together with him, by the faith of the operation of God, while they are yet in their ſins,

ſins, in their ungodly ſtate? And how can any witneſs the faith of the operation of God in this ſtate? Now it had been better he had forborne affirming, that the Lord taught him thus; for truly the Lord never taught any thus. This is not truth from God, nor will it be owned by the Lord as his truth, when he comes to appear before him; and he ſhould have took it to himſelf, and not have put the name of the Lord to it.

But againſt this his own doctrine, he raiſeth an objection in theſe words; *Shall we mortify that which is mortified already?*

His anſwer is; *The old man, which is crucified together with Chriſt, is the ſtate of the fleſh, and of enmity. This is paſt away, and in this is the concern of our righteouſneſs, and juſtification properly.*

That which remains to be mortified, are our members upon earth, which are the fruits of that evil ſtate; and in the mortifying of theſe, is the concern of our ſanctification. The will of God is done in heaven, &c.

Anſw. Paul ſpeaks of the *law of ſin in his members*; and he alſo ſpeaks of the *body of death*, and cries out againſt that; *Oh! wretched man that I am*, ſaith he, *who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death*? He felt ſomewhat that nouriſhed and gave ſtrength to the law of ſin in his members, and looked upon himſelf as wretched, till he could meet with deliverance therefrom. Now ſome are of opinion that there is no being delivered from the body of ſin, while in this life. Doſt thou look upon it to be done in Chriſt, for us, without us; but never to be done by Chriſt in us? Let me tell thee, if ever thou come to witneſs the pure eternal light of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt revealed in thee; that will not find out ſome members on earth only, but the very body thereof; and ſhew thee the neceſſity of the putting off that body from thee, and that circumciſion whereby it is to be done, which is the circumciſion of Chriſt. Mark the promiſe of the new-covenant, *I will circumciſe thine heart, and the heart of thy ſeed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, that thou mayeſt live.* Is not this the circumciſion of Chriſt? Doth not this cut off the body of the ſins of the fleſh, in the particular, where this is witneſſed? This is the truth, as it is in Jeſus, even *to put off the old man with his deeds.* It doth not ſay, *The body is put of in Chriſt without us*, and men muſt only put off *the members or deeds*; but, *they muſt put off the body*, and come to witneſs in themſelves the very nature, ſpirit, root, and principle from whence they proceed, cut down and deſtroyed in them. They muſt feel *the axe laid to the root of the corrupt tree*, and it *cut down* in them (not think it enough to ſay, it is done in Chriſt for them); yea, they muſt alſo witneſs *the Lord ariſing to ſhake terribly the earth*, in which the tree grew; that ſo the place of dragons and ſerpents (where each lay in times paſt) may henceforward *become the place of holineſs; where graſs may grow, and the new plants and flowers of the paradiſe of God.*

And how is the will of God done in heaven? Is it done in heaven after this manner? Have mercy and righteouſneſs the preheminence, the leading of the van? (they are his own words) and ſaid to go before, and look down

down from heaven after this manner (the body of ſin being put off in Chriſt there)? Are there not thoſe here on earth, who dwell in heaven? whoſe converſation is in heaven; even the witneſſes to God's holy truth who are aſcended up above the ſpirit of this world, and dwell in God's holy Spirit; and who walk in the light, as God is in the light. Hell is not far from the wicked; nor is heaven far from them who are renewed in the ſpirits of their minds, and who witneſs the paſſing away of the old things, and the new creation in Chriſt. Oh! that he could look back (in a true ſenſe) and ſee how he hath wreſted thoſe ſcriptures! *Pſal.* lxxxv. 9, 10, 11. *Iſa.* iv. 2. and *Epheſ.* ii. 6. after his own imaginations: and, indeed, in this ſpirit, men cannot but turn the precious truth of God into a lie; that is, as to themſelves, as to their own knowledge of it. It is known how the branch of the Lord is beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth excellent and comely, and in what day it is ſo; which day is, *When the Lord ſhall have waſhed away the filth of the daughter of Sion, and ſhall have purged the blood,* &c. *by the ſpirit of judgment, and by the ſpirit of burning,* Iſa. iv. 4. *Then every one that is left ſhall be called holy, and the branch of the Lord ſhall be glorious in the midſt of them, and the fruits of the earth excellent and comely for them. And then they that are thus purged, ſhall ſit with Chriſt in the heavenly places; there being an abundant entrance miniſtered to them into the everlaſting kingdom,* 2 Peter i. 11.

Thirdly, *He chargeth it with making the obedience and ſuffering of Chriſt ſuperfluous, except only as a pattern.*

Anſw. Chriſt came to do the Father's will; to obey, to ſuffer, *to taſte death for every man*; to fight with and overcome the Devil; to offer an holy, ſpotleſs ſacrifice for all mankind, that through him they might witneſs atonement and acceptance. And the Lord ſaw the uſe of this, and we witneſs the uſe of this, and find every thing in its proper place and ſervice in him, who is God's covenant of life and peace in us, and to us. But the work of this day is not to preach up a notional knowledge of theſe things (the Chriſtian world, ſo called, hath been drowned and dead in them long enough), but to bring to that meaſure of the Spirit, to that ſenſe of *grace and truth, which is come by Jeſus Chriſt*; wherein the benefit of theſe things is truly reaped and enjoyed; and, indeed, that is the work committed unto us from the Lord, who gave us this teſtimony to bear, whatever men may think or ſpeak of us.

And whereas he ſpeaks of our laying hold of paſſages, in his printed ſermons, to favour our cauſe:

Anſw. That is his miſtake as to me; it was for his ſake I mentioned it. There was indeed, at that time, ſomewhat ſtirring in him, which would have gathered him, had he known and obeyed its voice, and not run out into lofty notions concerning it. He had ſome ſenſe then of a glory approaching, which he might have from the true prophet; though even then he

ran out in his imaginations concerning it, and did not rightly apprehend, nor know how and when it appeared.

He hath further charges againſt us; *Of crying up works againſt the workman; man's grace and righteouſneſs againſt God's; conformity to Chriſt againſt Chriſt; yea, to make a Chriſt of our righteouſneſs, a Saviour of our conformity.*

Anſw. Oh! what will this man do, when the Lord ſhall ſhew unto him that he hath charged not ſo much us, as the Spirit and power, and precious appearance of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, with theſe things! We cry up works no otherwiſe than we are taught of God, and as the apoſtles and prophets have cried them up. Faith is neceſſary, and works are neceſſary in their places; and the juſtification of each follows them. And he that receiveth the Spirit of the Son, and therein doth righteouſneſs, is therein eſteemed of God righteous, *as the Son is righteous*, 1 John iii. 7. God juſtifieth us in his Son, and loveth his holy ſeed too therein, and the faith that comes from him, and all the works that are wrought in him; and out of this holy root of life and power is no man, nor his faith, nor his works juſtified.

Then for man's grace and righteouſneſs. Where doth he hear us ſpeak of man's grace? Oh! what doth he mean! Will he miſrepreſent the cauſe of his neighbour or brother, to make it bad? And for man's righteouſneſs, we do not cry it up or put it on, but teſtify men muſt be uncloathed of it; and we ourſelves were fain to part with it, and put it off, before we could be cloathed with God's righteouſneſs. But the works of life, the works of God's Spirit, the works of the new creature, the works of the new covenant; theſe are not man's works, nor unrighteous works, condemned by God; but juſtified in and through him that works them. The works wrought in us are truly acceptable, and we in *him who works them*, who is our righteouſneſs. And concerning this people (theſe children of the new covenant) which the Lord hath begotten and brought forth in this our day, that ſcripture is fulfilled in them, and upon them: *Their righteouſneſs is of me, ſaith the Lord*, Iſai. liv. 17. Well! as long as the Lord ſaith ſo, we matter not though others ſay, *that our righteouſneſs is of ourſelves*, and that it is our own righteouſneſs; being aſſured that God's teſtimony in our hearts (as to this thing) will ſtand.

He aggravateth this charge thus: *And this to be done by thoſe that have been ſo far enlightened, and that account all the religion and profeſſion in the world below them as carnal.*

Anſw. Indeed we magnify truth, life, the anointing, the ſpiritual the inward appearance of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to which we have been turned, and in it made ſpiritual; and all other knowledge, faith, profeſſion, religion (which hath not its riſe here) we cannot but call carnal. For the enlightening Spirit of the Lord hath given us this teſtimony to bear, againſt all the dead notional profeſſors of this age, who build from the letter (or rather their apprehenſions of the letter) out of the life; all which cry up names of the foundation and corner-ſtone; but refuſe, reject, deny, and

turn

turn from the corner-ſtone himſelf; and have neither ſkill nor patience to try what he is, in this his pure, precious, living, powerful, and glorious appearance in the ſpiritual light of his inward day, after the long thick darkneſs of the foregoing night. And woe would be unto us, if we did not thus teſtify! For for this cauſe we were born and brought into the world, to teſtify to the preſent appearance of our God, and of his Chriſt, in this our day. Glory to him who hath called and choſen us to, and (in a true and precious meaſure and degree of his own pure life) made us faithful therein.

This (ſaith he) *is ſo far from giving us a lift nearer heaven, that I cannot more properly reſemble it than to the coming forth of Amaleck, who met Iſrael by the way when they were come forth out of Egypt, and ſmote the hindmoſt of them*, &c.

Anſw. Do not talk of having a lift nearer heaven. Oh! learn the way, the holy way, the living way, wherein no dead, unclean thing can walk. Learn to know God's Spirit in yourſelves from that which oppoſeth his Spirit. Ye have been long learning, after your old conceivings and apprehenſions of the letter; oh! at length come to learn the truth as it is in Jeſus, which diſcovers ſin and death, and the body of it, and crucifies and puts it off, and makes room in the heart for him that is true and pure.

And then for Amaleck's ſmiting Iſrael, Oh! how greatly are ye miſtaken! Ye take yourſelves for Iſrael, and us for Amaleck; whereas, if your eyes were anointed, ye would ſee that we have been begotten and born of God's Spirit, through the Word of life, which was from the beginning, wherein we have been circumciſed with the circumciſion made without hands, that we might worſhip God in his own pure Spirit, and in his living truth; and that our God hath inwardly appeared to us, and led us out of Egypt's land, and out of Babylon alſo, and all the lands whereinto we have been ſcattered in the cloudy and dark day: and that this is Amaleck's ſpirit in your ſeveral ſorts of profeſſors (through your dark imaginations and conceivings about the letter) which riſeth up againſt us; and this ſpirit in you feareth not that God who hath appeared, and by his own holy arm of power hath led, and is leading us. So that we may take up the complaint of the prophet in this day, *Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* For though we ſpeak what we have heard, ſeen, and felt of the life which is eternal, and of the *Word which was in the beginning*; yet ye are ſo far from the witneſs of God in your own hearts that ye cannot receive our teſtimony, but oppoſe it with your dead, dry, notional, conceited, imaginary knowledge, which will ſtand you in no ſtead at all when ye come to appear before God.

Then he proceedeth, complaining againſt us thus: *Ah, Sir! inſtead of clapping us on the back, and miniſtering to us in our journey, you clog our march, and fall upon our rear. Inſtead of ſerving the kingdom of Chriſt, which the church is now in travail of, you deny the firſt principles of the goſpel, and wholly*

wholly diſown the hope of Chriſt's ſecond appearing and kingdom; knowing or acknowledging, as no other Saviour, ſo no other kingdom, but a principle or a light in yourſelves.

Anſw. God is light, and in him is no darkneſs at all; and this is the meſſage of the goſpel, 1 *John* i. 5.

And Chriſt, who is one with the Father, he is one and the ſame light with him; and we confeſs we look not for another beſides him, nor for another kingdom beſides the kingdom which is revealed in him; for the kingdom which is revealed and manifeſted in and by him, is the ſpiritual, eternal, everlaſting kingdom, and there is not another. We do not ſay the fullneſs, or that the full glory of the kingdom, is now revealed or enjoyed (nay, we confeſs we have but the earneſt, in compariſon, but a meaſure, a proportion); but this is the ſame in nature and kind with the fullneſs itſelf. And all that is of Chriſt, of his Spirit, of his nature, is ſaving; the leaſt meaſure of his grace that appeareth in any heart bringeth ſalvation with it; the leaſt touch of his finger hath pure life and ſaving virtue in it; yet this is not diſtinct nor ſeparate from the fullneſs, and ſo it is not another, though it be not the fullneſs.

But whereas thou complaineſt of our not miniſtering to you in your journey, but clogging it: Oh! that you knew what your journey is, and whither ye are marching and travelling in that preſent ſpirit wherein ye act! We acknowledge it God's great love and mercy to us, to deliver us from that ſpirit, and from that way of knowledge, religion, and worſhip wherein ye ſtill abide. And what we have ſeen and known from the Lord, that are we required of him to teſtify to you; and if your eyes were opened (by the principle of light from him) in the holy anointing, ye would bow to the teſtimony; but judging of it in a contrary wiſdom and ſpirit, ye not only turn from it, but fight againſt it; and reproach and ſlander us for our faithfulneſs to the Lord, and good-will to you; which the Lord make you ſenſible of, and forgive you, that at length ye may know and receive him (who is the deſire of all nations) in his pure, living, inward, and ſpiritual appearance.

And as for denying the firſt principles; that belongs to yourſelves; for do ye not deny that light which is the foundation of all, and wherein and whereby all the myſteries of God's kingdom are ſeen; and inſtead thereof, ſet up a notional comprehenſive knowledge of your own conceiving, comprehending, and gathering from the letter; whereas no man can underſtand the letter but as he comes into and abides in the light? This we have experienced in ourſelves formerly; for we were but gueſſing at and imagining concerning the letter, until we were turned to, and our minds gathered into, and comprehended in, the light of God's Spirit.

And as for diſowning the hope of Chriſt's kingdom, the Lord knoweth that is far from us; for we ourſelves bleſs him for what of his kingdom is al-

ready appeared, and wait and hope for the further and fuller appearance thereof. But this we confeſs, another Spirit, another Chriſt, another light, another life, another power, another kingdom, beſides him who hath already appeared, we do not expect: for he is our king and kingdom both; and the leaſt proportion of his life and Spirit received (bought with the loſs of all, and ſo purchaſed and poſſeſſed) is no leſs than a pearl of great price, and an heavenly kingdom to him that enjoyeth it.

He addeth further: *If Chriſt be but a principle, then we are no other; and only principles ſhall be ſaved, and no perſons: Is this your goſpel?*

Anſw. Chriſt is the promiſed ſeed, to which all the promiſes are, in which ſeed all the families of the earth are bleſſed, as they are gathered unto, and grafted into, him. But he is not only the ſeed, but the ſeedſman alſo; who ſoweth of his life, of his nature, of his Spirit, of his heavenly image, in the hearts of the children of men. He giveth a meaſure of the grace and truth unto them, the fullneſs whereof he hath received of his Father. Now this meaſure of the light eternal is very precious, and is that wherein he appears and manifeſts himſelf. Yea, indeed, glorious things are both ſpoken and witneſſed of the ſeed of life, of the ſeed of the kingdom, of the grace and truth which comes by Jeſus Chriſt; but we never ſaid that this ſeed or meaſure of life is the fullneſs itſelf, but that which the fullneſs imparts to us, and brings ſalvation home to our doors by. And if any man will receive Chriſt, he muſt receive that from Chriſt wherein he manifeſts himſelf. There is a difference between the light which enlighteneth (the fullneſs of light, which giveth the meaſure of light, the meaſure of anointing to us) and the meaſure or proportion which is given; the one is Chriſt himſelf, the other is his gift; yet his gift is of the ſame nature with himſelf, and leavens thoſe that receive it, and abide in it, into the ſame nature: ſo that not only the gift is one with him, but we alſo are one with him in the gift. Come, be not thus wiſe after the fleſh, nor do not ſtrive ſo (in thy wiſdom and knowledge out of the truth) to triumph over the truth, and truth's teſtimony, in this the day of God's great love, and glorious arm of ſalvation, revealed in the midſt of his people, which he hath gathered out of Babylon, and the dark knowledge thereof, into the light and kingdom of his own dear Son; where he giveth them eternal life, and of the fruits of the good and heavenly land.

He addeth: *I firmly believe, and ſo have all the ſaints that have gone before, that Chriſt is a perſon, and his Spirit is a living principle in the hearts of all the faithful; but it is not the Spirit or principle in us that did redeem us, but the man Chriſt Jeſus.*

Anſw. If he mean by the man Chriſt Jeſus, *the ſecond Adam, the quickening Spirit, the heavenly man, the Lord from heaven, he who is One with the Father, the Word which was in the beginning, which created all things*, I grant him to be the Redeemer; for it was he *who laid down his glory, wherewith he was glorified before the world was, and made himſelf of no reputation, but took*

took upon him the form of a ſervant, and came as a ſervant, in the faſhion of a man, to do the will. But if he diſtinguiſh Chriſt from this Word and Spirit, and make the man's nature the Saviour, and the Godhead only aſſiſtant to him (as he ſeemed to word it before, and as theſe his words ſeem to imply), that I utterly deny. For ſo teſtifieth the ſcripture, *I am the Lord, and beſides me there is no Saviour. I am a juſt God, and a Saviour*, &c. So that Chriſt is the Saviour, as he is one with God. It was God's arm and power (revealed in him) that effects ſalvation. Yea, if I may ſo ſpeak, his obedience was of value, as it came from the Spirit, and it was the *offering it up through the eternal Spirit* that made it ſo acceptable to God. So that we muſt not attribute redemption originally to him as a man, but as he came from God; and bring the honour all back to the ſpring and fountain from whence he had all, that God may be all in all, and the very kingdom of Chriſt may endure and abide for ever, in the root of life from whence it came.

And ſo he is not a foundation or the corner-ſtone diſtinct from God. He, as the foundation, was and is the rock of ages, the ſpiritual rock, both before and ſince he took upon him the body prepared for him. It is the Spirit, the life which was revealed in that man (by which he did his Father's will) which was and is the foundation whereupon all the living ſtones are built. There is a foundation of death, and that is the wicked ſpirit; there is a foundation of life, and that is the Holy Spirit, by which Chriſt himſelf was led and guided (in that his appearance in the fleſh), which deſcended upon him, and he was anointed with, and all his are to be anointed with, and live in, the ſame Spirit. And he that knows Chriſt in this Spirit, he hath the true and abiding knowledge of him, and no otherwiſe. And though the names *Meſſiah, Jeſus, Chriſt, Saviour, Anointed*, &c. were given to him as in the fleſh, or as man, they moſt properly and originally belong to him with reſpect to the divine life and birth in him, as the ſent one, *and only-begotten, proceeding from the Father, the brightneſs of his glory*, &c. For he, as the eternal Son of God, was the ſpiritual rock before he took upon him that body which was prepared for him, which expreſly was called *the body of Jeſus*, and which he called *this temple*; and diſtinctly, he being called *Jeſus Chriſt come in the fleſh, which every ſpirit that confeſſeth not, is not of God, but is that ſpirit of antichriſt*, 1 John iv. 3.

He ſpeaketh of ſitting on the throne of David.

Anſw. It is a great matter to know that throne which David's throne ſignified, and Chriſt ſitting thereon. His kingdom, his throne, are not of this outward worldly nature, but inward and ſpiritual; and his throne is in his kingdom and temple, where he reigns, and is worſhipped. He that knoweth Satan diſhonoured and caſt out, knoweth alſo Chriſt come in, and ſitting on his throne. Oh! that men did give over their dreaming about the heavenly glory, and come thither in the leadings of God's Spirit where it is revealed.

Was the ſcripture written in vain concerning the glorious ſtate of the goſpel? *But we all with open face beholding, as in a gloſs, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the ſame image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord*, 2 Cor. iii. 18.

He putteth up a prayer for us, *That the Lord would awaken us, and make us do our firſt works, and return to our firſt love.*

Anſw. Ah! poor man, how is he blinded! Not diſcerning how the Lord hath done this for us, and much more. But it is he himſelf that hath loſt his firſt love, and doth not do his firſt works; but is found ſhort of that tenderneſs, quickneſs, and ſavour that once was in him. Oh! that he might ſee it, and return to him whoſe quickening virtue reſtores and heals!

He concludeth with the words of the prophet *Jeremiah*, chap. xiii. ver. 15, 16, 17. *Hear ye, and give ear; be not proud, for the Lord hath ſpoken. Give glory to the Lord your God, before he cauſe darkneſs, and before your feet ſtumble upon the dark mountains; and while ye look for light, he turn it into the ſhadow of death, and make it groſs darkneſs. But if ye will not hear it, my ſoul ſhall weep in ſecret places for your pride, and mine eyes ſhall weep ſore, and run down with tears, becauſe the Lord's flock is carried away captive.*

Anſw. How doth this man miſtake in his ſight and application of ſcriptures, ſeeing and applying in a wrong ſpirit? It is true, the Lord hath ſpoken; but he himſelf, and many ſuch as he is, have not given ear. And what is the reaſon? but becauſe they are exalted above the pure principle of life in their own hearts. And are not ſuch proud? Hath not he brought forth theſe weapons, theſe falſe charges and reaſonings, in this paper, againſt the heritage of God in the pride of his heart? As for us, the Lord God hath humbled us, and taught us, who have learned, and daily learn of him, in the humility, and in humility and fear do we give forth our teſtimony, though alſo in the authority and majeſty of our maſter's name, whoſe name ſtands over and is exalted above every name, and his mountain and gathering is (in the pure authority and power of his Spirit) above all other mountains and gatherings whatſoever. And as for God's cauſing darkneſs, let him, and ſuch as he is, look for it; for God doth not, nor will, cauſe darkneſs to them whom he hath gathered into the light of his Spirit; but ſaith to them, *Ariſe, ſhine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is riſen upon thee, O city and dwelling-place of the living God.* But thoſe that know not, or turn againſt his appearance, and cry up former diſpenſations of the ſame life and power, but reproach and blaſpheme the preſent, on them doth he cauſe the groſs darkneſs to fall and cover them. And this which he threateneth us with, is already fallen upon himſelf, when his feet are fallen upon the dark mountains; and whilſt he looks for light, he hath loſt that which once he had; and his very light (as he eſteems it) is become obſcurity and groſs darkneſs, as this dark paper of his (from the dark ſpirit and principle) makes manifeſt to all that ſhall read in it any meaſure of true ſenſe or diſcerning. And truly my ſoul doth weep in ſecret for his pride

and

and height of ſpirit, in oppoſing the Lord, his truth, and people. And for this cauſe ſhall thoſe, who have looked upon themſelves as the children of the kingdom and flock of God, be laid waſte; and know, that as it was a dreadful thing to oppoſe Chriſt Jeſus, the Lord, in his appearance in fleſh, ſo is it alſo dreadful to oppoſe his appearance in his Spirit and power, wherein he is ariſen to ſet up his kingdom, and to throw down Babylon, which is built in the likeneſs of Sion, but by and in another ſpirit.

Thoſe in whom there is any tenderneſs towards God (and true breathings after him left) the Lord give them the ſenſe and true underſtanding of this inward ſpiritual appearance of his Son, and of what they have been doing, and are doing, againſt it; that they may not continue to fight againſt the Lord, and kick againſt that which is able to wound and prick, to their own hurt, and eternal ruin. For there is not ſalvation in any other name than in that which is now revealed; bleſſed are all they that truſt therein, it being not another, but the ſame that ever was.

To his POSTSCRIPT.

HE beginneth it with the juſtification of that paſſage of his in a foregoing letter of his to me, wherein he ſaith, *Chriſt is heaven, and I am hell.*

Anſw. When God viſiteth man, he finds him in union with hell, death, and darkneſs; and the man is dead, is dark, is of an helliſh nature and ſpirit in that ſtate: but when the Lord hath converted him, cut him off from that root, leavened him with the Spirit and nature of his Son, is he hell ſtill? *Ye were darkneſs* (ſaith the apoſtle) *but now are ye light in the Lord. And ſuch were ſome of you; but ye are waſhed, but ye are ſanctified, but ye are juſtified in the name of the Lord Jeſus, and by the Spirit of our God.*

A man can be but hell before he is waſhed, before his filth be purged away by the Spirit of judgment and burning, before the old leaven is purged out, and he ſanctified and made a new lump; but after the Lord hath thus changed him, and new-created him in Chriſt, is he ſtill hell?

He ſaith: *He doth not call the new creature hell; but there is an old man, an outward man, as well as the new man, and the inward man; fleſh as well as Spirit in the regenerate.*

Anſw. What doth he mean by the outward man? The ſinful body, the body of fleſh, is within. The outward body, that is not hell; that is the the temple of God, where the heart is ſanctified: and the pure Word of life ſanctifies throughout, even in ſoul, in body, in Spirit, thoſe that are ſubject to it. *Know ye not that your bodies are the temples of the living God?*

And

And your ſpirits much more; for God is a Spirit, and he dwells in a ſpiritual temple, and his temple is holy.

He addeth: *And unleſs your attainment be beyond Paul's, he found that in him (that is, in his fleſh) dwelt no good thing; and the fleſh luſting againſt the ſpirit, ſo that he could not do the thing that he would.*

Anſw. Paul did once experience ſuch a ſtate; that he felt himſelf *carnal, ſold under ſin*; when he did not find *how to perform that which was good, but did what he hated, the law of ſin being ſtrong (in his members) againſt the law of life in his mind*; which ſtate he calleth *a ſtate of captivity to the law of ſin in his members*, and calleth it *a wretched ſtate*, Rom. vii. 23, 24. But did Paul never experience another ſtate? Did he never witneſs the virtue and power of the new covenant, *even the law of the Spirit of life, and the power thereof, freeing him from the ſtrength and captivity of the law of ſin in his members?* There were young men, John ſpeaks of, *who were ſtrong, and had overcome the wicked-one.* Did Paul himſelf never attain to that ſtate? He bid others *be ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*, and ſhewed them how to reſiſt in it, ſo as to overcome. Did he never experience and witneſs it himſelf? He ſaid, *He had fought a good fight, and was more than a conqueror.* What! was he then a captive to the law of ſin in his members, and did he then cry out, *Who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death?* He ſaid, *He could do all things through Chriſt, that ſtrengthened him.* Was not that a ſtate different from that other wherein *he found only to will, and could not do the good he deſired, but did the evil he allowed not, but hated?* And bleſſed be the Lord, there are many at this day who witneſs a farther ſtate of redemption and deliverance from ſin, and the law thereof in the members, than that ſtate of captivity was which Paul there expreſſeth his former groanings and complainings under. For he was not in that ſtate of captivity when he wrote that epiſtle, but knew the dominion of grace over ſin, and bid that church *be ſubject to the grace, and not give way to ſin, but yield their members ſervants to righteouſneſs unto holineſs*, chap. 6. For that other place, *of the fleſh luſting againſt the ſpirit, and the ſpirit againſt the fleſh*, Gal. v. 17. he doth not there ſpeak of himſelf, but of the *Galatians*, who were in a weak, low, and (indeed) fallen ſtate, from the Spirit and power of the goſpel, having let in that which was contrary thereunto. And ſo he ſtrives to gather them into the Spirit again, and bids them *live in the Spirit, and walk in the Spirit, and ſo they ſhould not fulfil the luſts of the fleſh:* for in the new covenant man is taught of God the holy leſſon of ceaſing from evil, and doing good; and taught in the virtue and power of the covenant; ſo that he learns daily, and grows daily out of deceit into truth, until he come to be *a true Iſraelite, in whom there is no guile.* And ſo in the ſpiritual war, *the houſe of Saul grows weaker and weaker, and the houſe of David ſtronger and ſtronger*, until Saul's kingdom be at length overturned, and wholly deſtroyed, and the kingdom of David eſtabliſhed in righteouſneſs for ever and

and ever. Then Jeruſalem, the holy building, the city of the living people, the city of righteouſneſs (the habitation of righteouſneſs, and mountain of holineſs) is known, and Jeruſalem is witneſſed *a quiet habitation, there being peace in all her borders.* Then the mind is fully ſtayed upon the Lord in all conditions, and he keeps it in perfect peace. Then the ſoul is careful for nothing; but in every thing makes its requeſts known to God by prayer and ſupplication, with thankſgiving; and the peace of God, which paſſeth all underſtanding, keeps the heart and mind through Chriſt Jeſus. Surely the apoſtle had learned himſelf (when he taught others this) *in every ſtate to be content.* He knew *how to be abaſed, and how to abound,* &c. O glorious ſtate! O pure ſtate of pure life in the heart! And if I ſhould add, O perfect ſtate! The apoſtle James ſaith, *Let patience have its perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing,* or *in nothing,* James i. 3. When Paul had ſo learned Chriſt that abundance could not lift him up, nor want deject him, or cauſe him to repine or diſtruſt, what did he want of this perfect ſtate?

His next words are, *If you have no ſenſe of this, your ſtate is never the better to be liked.*

Anſw. Chriſt led captivity captive; and the ſame power is revealed to lead captivity captive in us. And truly when God leads our ſouls out of captivity, putting his fear within us, writing his living powerful law of life in our hearts, and putting his Spirit into us, leading us in the way of holineſs, and cauſing us to walk therein, we find this a better ſtate than when we were groaning under deep captivity.

Further he ſaith, *If your peace and joy ſtand in ſeeing no ſin yourſelf* (in yourſelf I ſuppoſe it ſhould be) *I ſhall more than ſuſpect it not to be the peace and joy of Paul and all the ſaints, but a deluſion.*

Anſw. Our peace and joy is in him who is without ſin; and it abounds in us, in his cleanſing and delivering us from ſin; and we have found him remove ſin as far from us as the eaſt is from the weſt; and as he removeth tranſgreſſion from us, and bringeth ſin and the power of Satan to an end in us, he giveth us of his peace and joy. And truly we do not only witneſs him deſtroying ſin and the works of the devil, but breaking the very head of the ſerpent, caſting him out, *and piercing Leviathan, that crooked ſerpent, and ſlaying the dragon that is in the ſea.* And though ſuch as he may ſuſpect our peace and joy; yet, while Chriſt gives it us, and maintains it in us, it is very ſweet and pleaſant to us; and the time may come, that he may wiſh from his heart that he might partake with us therein.

He concludes the matter thus: *We are without ſin in him, but in ourſelves nothing but ſin.*

Anſw. He ſpake of deluſion juſt before; a greater than this I do not know. For Chriſt doth make a real change; if any man be in Chriſt, there is a new creation, there is a real change. The man is not what he was before; but he puts off that which is old, and puts on that which is new;

new; and ſo is really changed in his ſtate, and in the ſight of God, and is not what he was before. The heart, when it is really renewed, and waſhed by the water, blood, and Spirit, is not the old, abominable, wicked, deceitful heart that it was before. If this be his knowledge and experience, let him keep it to himſelf: for my part, I deſire not to partake with him therein; but to be like Chriſt, my Lord and maſter, even ſanctified throughout in ſoul, body, and ſpirit, that I may become wholly his, and the enemy of my ſoul have no part in me.

He ſaith, *Chriſt ſhall appear without ſin to ſalvation.*

Anſw. I grant it; but when, and how? Doth he not inwardly appear without ſin to ſalvation to thoſe who have waited for, haſtened, and come to the inward day? Doth not Chriſt appear without ſin to ſalvation inwardly in the day of his own Spirit? Is not ſalvation then witneſſed for walls and bulwarks? Is not the glorious ſalvation of the goſpel brought forth in the goſpel-day? And is there not in the life and dominion of grace a pure defence about all the glory? Is there any ſin in the grace and Spirit of the goſpel which appears and ſhines in the day of the Lord? And doth not this grace bring ſalvation to them that wait for the revealing of it?

He ſeemeth to clear himſelf of watching for our haltings.

Anſw. Had he not watched for our haltings, and received things into, and conſidered them in the prejudiced part, he could not have written ſuch a paper againſt truth and us, ſo far from true underſtanding and judgment, as this is.

But he ſaith, *He hath watched for our repentings.*

Anſw. If we ſhould repent of having our eyes opened by the Lord, and turning to his truth, and receiving his Holy Spirit, and of having the precious promiſes of the Scripture made good to us, and fulfilled in us, we might juſtly loſe our portion and inheritance of life for ever. We have repented from dead works; but we cannot repent of God's pure truth, and the living way, ſpirit, and power thereof. But this I can tell him, and that from the Lord, whoſe name I reverence and worſhip in, that the Lord watcheth for his repentings, and turnings from that ſpirit in him which darkeneth him concerning, and prejudiceth him againſt, the truth.

He beſeecheth me in love, &c. and requireth me to clear myſelf of free-will, falling from grace, denying election of perſons, and imputed righteouſneſs.

Anſw. What the Lord requireth of me, that I muſt mind; and I have divers times expreſſed my heart nakedly in theſe things.

The principle of life which the Lord hath raiſed in me, in that is the freedom to good, and in that am I made free by Jeſus Chriſt, my Lord. And I had rather witneſs him upholding me by his power, than contend about a notion of falling or not falling away. And my care hath been about making my calling and election ſure in him, who is ſure to thoſe that are of him for ever. And I have witneſſed the righteouſneſs of the Lord

Lord Jeſus Chriſt revealed in me, and imputed to me, and my ſoul cloathed therewith in his ſight; bleſſed be his name.

Oh! that the profeſſors of this age might come to the anointing, and ſee thoſe things in the anointing! then would they know the truth and harmony of the ſcriptures therein. But men, by the letter without the Spirit, can never diſcern or find out the myſtery of life; but only gather into their minds and retain a literal knowledge, that killeth.

He bids me, *Love the truth better than a party.*

Anſw. The Lord knoweth he hath taught me ſo to do: for had it not been for the evidence and demonſtration of God's Spirit in his people, I could never have owned them. (For oh! how low was the knowledge they held forth, in my eye, before the power of the Lord reached to my heart, raiſing up his own ſeed in me, wherein I knew them!) And the Lord alſo knoweth, that it is in him that I love, and diſcern, and honour them to this very day: yea, I ſee his name written on their foreheads, and them brought forth in the glorious image and heavenly life of his Son (though it be hid from the wiſe eye of the profeſſors of this age), and in the true light, with the true eye (which God hath opened in me) have I ſeen it.

He ſpeaks of *Clinging together, and keeping up a party againſt all right.*

Anſw. Nay, nay; this is the gathering of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt by his Spirit and power, after the long night of darkneſs; and we are kept up by the ſame Spirit, and power, and life of truth, which gathered us.

He ſaith, *It is not a calling for a work within, which will give you authority to lay waſte Chriſt and the goſpel, in the moſt fundamental and concerning truths thereof, and thoſe above-mentioned,* &c. *And above all the reſt, denying the perſon of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and making him but a light, or notion, or principle in the heart of man.*

Anſw. This is but his own miſtake, not a true and juſt charge againſt us, as he will one day ſee. The Lord hath not taught us to lay waſte, nor do we lay waſte any truth of the goſpel; but own every thing in its place. And though our religion do not lie in notions concerning him, but in the principle of life itſelf, even in the grace and truth, which is by Jeſus Chriſt (which is a meaſure of light from him the full light); yet we do not learn thereby to deny the full light, but the more to acknowledge it. And we own him to be the true and full light, and his outward appearance in that body, in the fullneſs of time, to fulfil the Father's will therein; and his appearance in Spirit and power in the hearts of his people in the day of the goſpel; and his ſetting up his ſpiritual and glorious kingdom there, where he reigns as king on the throne of David over the ſpiritual Iſrael of God.

Come, conſider ſeriouſly: Do not ye yourſelves fall ſhort of not only the principle and power of life, but alſo of the true knowledge of things according to the letter?

He confeſſeth, *There is too little power; and without it profeſſion is little worth.*

Anſw. Oh! that the profeſſors of this age knew the ſcriptures and the power of God, and had that knowledge which comes from, and ſtands in, the power! For then that evidence and demonſtration of truth would be witneſſed which puts an end to the diſputes and reaſonings of the mind; and then the great care would be to live the life of that which God makes manifeſt and requires in the new covenant.

He ſaith, *To pull down the pillars and principles of the goſpel, is the work the devil employs his power in.*

Anſw. I grant what he ſaith is true (and wiſh he knew how rightly to apply it); but there is a great error and miſtake in his judgment about it. For the Lord is pulling down that which men have built up (which they may, in their miſtaken judgments, call principles and fundamentals), and is building up that which men have trampled on, even the tabernacle of David, which hath long been fallen down; and the city of the living God, which hath long been trodden under foot of the falſe Chriſtians; and the power of the devil is greatly at work to oppoſe this appearance and mighty work of the Lord in this day. Let him take heed of blaſpheming the Lord's power, calling it the devil's, and owning the devil's power for God's.

He concludeth thus: *Come to the point. What ſingular thing do you more than moding and wording it, ſave only that out of you have riſen men that have more audaciouſly lifted up a ſtandard againſt the ſealed and experienced truths of the goſpel than ever I have heard or read of any before you? You talk of words, and boaſt of perfection: I tell you, an humble ſenſe of a man's nothingneſs, driving him out of himſelf to live and glory in Chriſt alone, is more than all ſuch boaſted perfections a thouſand times. Sir, accept my zeal for your ſoul.*

Anſw. We are a people (many of us) who have gone through great diſtreſs for want of the Lord our God, and exceedingly waited and longed for his living and powerful appearance. And for my own part, this I can ſay, that had not this appearance been in power, and in the evidence and demonſtration of his Spirit to my ſoul (reaching to, and anſwering that which was of him in me) I could never have owned it; ſo deeply was I jealous of it, and prejudiced againſt it. And ſince my mind hath been turned to the pure Word of life, even the *Word which was in the beginning* (I ſpeak as in the Lord's preſence), it hath had ſingular effects on my heart. The light hath ſo ſearched me as I never was ſearched before, under all my former profeſſions; and the Lord hath given me a true and pure diſcerning of the things of his kingdom, in the light which is true and pure; and ſingular quickenings have I met with from his Spirit, and the faith which ſtands in his heavenly power, and giveth victory and dominion in him; bleſſed be his name. And the love which he hath given me is not notional, but ariſeth from his circumciſing my heart, and anſwereth his nature;

ture; ſpringing forth purely and naturally towards him, and thoſe of his image, and all his creatures; yea, towards thoſe who are enemies to me for his name's ſake.

I might mention the patience alſo, and faithfulneſs to his truth, with the long-ſuffering ſpirit, which cannot be worn out; which his Spirit teſtifieth in me to be of a ſingular nature; with many other things. Nor am I alone, or the chiefeſt; but have many equals; yea, there are ſuch as far exceed me in the heavenly and divine image of my Father. And the fruits are according to the root of life in us; and ſo acknowledged by all who look upon us with the true eye, with the eye of God's giving and opening.

Now the ſame that hath wrought thus inwardly in us, the ſame hath required ſome outward behaviour and expreſſions from us, which are fooliſh and weak to the eye of man's wiſdom, but choſen of God to hide the glory of this life from that eye which diſcerns it not, but deſpiſes the day of ſmall things. And though this be the leaſt part of our religion (yet ſubjected to, becauſe it is of God, whom we dare not diſobey in the leaſt), yet the ſpirit, which is contrary to God, caſteth this upon us, as if this were all, or at leaſt the main, wherein we differ from others. Some call the living words of truth from us (when God, according to his good promiſe, giveth them us) but canting; and thou calleſt all that is ſingular in us but *moding and wording of it.* Alas! it is in the main we differ from you; we holding our religion as we receive it from God, in the light and life of his Spirit: you as you apprehend it from the letter. Chriſt is our rock and foundation, as inwardly revealed; yours but as outwardly conceived of. We believe with the faith which is of the nature of him whom we believe in, which faith is mighty through God, and works through all the powers of darkneſs, giving victory over them all in God's way and time; ye believe with a faith which eſteems victory, and a perfect and intire ſtate (wanting nothing) as impoſſible while in this world. And as our root differs, ſo all that grows up in us differs from yours: ſo that indeed all is ſingular that is in us, and all alſo is ſingular that is brought forth by us, as the Spirit of the Lord, who knoweth the difference of things, witneſſeth.

Have we ſo long walked in the name and Spirit of our God amongſt you, ſhewing the ſingular virtues of his Spirit daily in our faithful teſtimony, ſufferings, patience, and converſation? And do ye ſtill cry, *What ſingular thing do ye?* Juſt like the Jews, who, after all Chriſt's mighty works, and demonſtrations of his Father's virtue and power outwardly, *aſked for a ſign.* Oh! that your eyes and hearts were opened by the Spirit and power of the Lord! for then ye would ſoon ſee otherwiſe in this reſpect than now ye do.

And then as for that expreſſion, *Of audaciouſly lifting up a ſtandard againſt the ſealed and experienced truths of the goſpel,* that is but an over-confident expreſſion, through prejudice and miſtake of judgment at leaſt: for I can

truly teſtify I have never learned, ſince the pure heavenly light of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath ſhined on my ſpirit, to deny any one truth that ever was ſealed to me, or experienced by me, in the days of my former profeſſion; for whatſoever was then of God hath been reſtored to me, and that only which was of the fleſh pared off. And I have ground alſo to believe, that it is ſo with others in this reſpect as it hath been with me.

He ſpeaks, *As if our difference or talk were about words.*

Nay, it is about things: for though we own the ſame Lord Jeſus Chriſt to be the foundation of life; yet after a different manner. Ye, as ye notionally apprehend concerning him; we, as we experience him to be the precious ſtone and foundation of life in us. And we teſtify of juſtification and ſanctification, as we witneſs him beſtowing it upon us, and working it in us.

But for boaſting of perfection, I wonder how he dares ſpeak thus! What! is there no fear of God before his eyes, or in his heart, that he dares charge us with that which is ſo utterly falſe? Where is any of us that did ever boaſt of perfection? But that God's power and covenant is able to make perfect, and that God's will is our perfect ſanctification in ſoul, body, and ſpirit; even that we be wholly leavened with the ſalt of the kingdom, and become a fit temple for him. This we humbly and reverently teſtify of, and preſs towards, in his holy name and fear.

And as for that humble ſenſe, *of a man's own nothingneſs, drawing him out of himſelf, to live and glory in Chriſt alone*, this we meet with, and witneſs in that light which this generation of profeſſors deſpiſeth. But others, tho' they may talk of it, can never come truly to witneſs it, but in that light wherein God beſtoweth and preſerveth it.

Well; the profeſſors of this age, who deſpiſe the light, ſhall one day find, that what they take themſelves to be, they are not, in God's ſight; nor are we, before him, what we are reproachfully repreſented by them; *but we are his workmanſhip in Chriſt Jeſus, created by him unto good works*; and that it is natural to us to bring forth the fruits of righteouſneſs and holineſs to our God, however men reproach us.

As for his zeal for my ſoul, *which he deſired me to accept*, it is ſtrange zeal, and would tend to my utter deſtruction, had it power over me; but bleſſed be my God, who hath called me into the light of his Son, and I am ſatisfied that he will preſerve me therein, even in that holy Spirit of life which he hath gathered me into, from all deceivable ſpirits of darkneſs whatſoever, in that holy covenant wherein his ſtrength appears to me, and is revealed in me. And oh! that he might know what that ſpirit is wherein he hath thus appeared againſt the Lord (though under a pretence as if it were for him), and bring forth no more the fruits of it.

For a cloſe, I ſhall add a few words on that ſcripture, *Phil.* iii. 3. *For we are the circumciſion, which worſhip God in the ſpirit, and rejoice in Chriſt Jeſus, and have no confidence in the fleſh.* It is a precious thing to witneſs this

this ſcripture fulfilled in the heart; to experience that there, which inwardly circumciſeth, which cutteth off the foreſkin of the heart, which lieth over it and veileth, till it be cut off by the inward appearance of the life and power of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt inwardly revealed. Then when this is done, I can truly and ſenſibly ſay, *I am a Jew inward.* How ſo? How can that be proved? Why I am inwardly circumciſed. I have felt that within which circumciſeth the heart, and have borne the inward pain and cutting thereof, and am circumciſed by it. That which ſtood between me and the Lord is cut off, the veil is taken away, the ſtiff-neckedneſs and unſubjection to God removed, the wall of ſeparation is inwardly broken down, and now I am in true unity of Spirit and communion with my God, even with the Father, and the Son, in that One Holy Spirit wherein they are One.

Now I can bow before the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and worſhip him in his own Spirit, even in the new and freſh life thereof day by day. Now my rejoicing is in Chriſt Jeſus, whom the Father hath ſent, both outwardly in a body of fleſh to fulfil the holy will, and do what therein the Father had for him to do, and alſo inwardly in his Spirit and power unto my heart, to deſtroy the works of the devil there, and ſo to work me out of the enmity and unreconciled ſtate, into the love and reconciliation. And I cannot but rejoice both in what he did in his body of fleſh for me, and in what he doth by his Spirit and power in me. And, bleſſed be the Lord, I feel him near, his Spirit near, his life near, his power near, his pure virtue near, his holy wiſdom near, his righteouſneſs near, his redemption near; *for he is my rock, and my ſtrength, and my ſalvation, day by day.* And I have no confidence in the fleſh, in what I am, in what I can do after the fleſh; but my confidence is in him, who hath weakened me, who hath ſtripped me, who hath impoveriſhed me, who hath brought me to nothing in myſelf, that I might be all in him, and that I might find him all unto me. He is my peace, he is my life, he is my righteouſneſs, he is my holineſs, he is the image wherein I am renewed; in him is my acceptance with the Father; he is my advocate, he is my hope and joy for ever. He hath deſtroyed that in me which was contrary to God, and keepeth it down for ever. He is my ſhepherd; his arm hath gathered me, and his arm encompaſſeth me day by day. I reſt under the ſhadow of his wings, from whence the healing virtue of his ſaving health droppeth upon my ſpirit day by day. Oh! I cannot tell any man what he is unto me; but, bleſſed be the Lord, I feel him near, his righteouſneſs near, his ſalvation daily revealed before that eye which he hath opened in me, in that true living ſenſe wherewith he hath quickened me.

And now, ye that have high notions and rich comprehenſive knowledge concerning theſe things, but not the thing itſelf, the life itſelf, the Spirit itſelf, the new and living covenant, and law of life itſelf, wherein alone Chriſt is livingly revealed. Ah! how poor, miſerable, blind, and naked are you, in the midſt of all your traditional knowledge and pretended experiences concerning theſe things! Come,

Come, be quiet a while, and ceaſe from bitterneſs of ſpirit, and reviling the work and people of the Lord; for the Lord knoweth, and will make manifeſt, both who are his, and who are not his. All the living ſtones are his; but the great profeſſors of the words of ſcripture, without the Spirit and life of the ſcriptures, are not his, nor ever were, nor ever will be owned by him.

Come, learn to diſtinguiſh from God by his life, by his anointing, by the everlaſting infallible rule, and not by words without life, where the great error and miſtake hath been in all ages and generations. The great way of deceit hath long been (and ſtill is) by a form of godlineſs, without power: be ſure ye be not thus deceived; for if ye miſs of the power which ſaves, ye cannot but periſh for ever. And what if the appearance of the Spirit and power of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt inwardly, which is that which ſaves, be as ſtrange to your ſenſe, underſtanding, and judgment, as his outward appearance was unto the people of the Jews? Take heed of their ſpirit, take heed of their judgment, who judged according to the appearance of things to them, which they imagined and conceived from the ſcriptures, but judged not the true and righteous judgment, which only the children of the true wiſdom can.

POSTSCRIPT.

THERE are *four* or *five* things very precious, which were generally witneſſed in the days of the apoſtles among the true Chriſtians, which are all mentioned together, *Heb.* vi. 4, 5.

Firſt, *They were truly enlightened.*

The miniſters of the goſpel were ſent by Chriſt, to turn men from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan to God, *Acts* xxvi. 18. 1 *John* i. 5. And they were faithful in their miniſtry, and did turn men from the darkneſs and power of Satan to the light of God's holy Spirit; and they were enlightened by it, and received power through it, and ſo came to be children of the light, and to walk in the light, as God is in the light.

Secondly, *They taſted of the heavenly gift.*

What is the heavenly gift which Chriſt gives to thoſe who come unto him, and become his ſheep? He gives them life, eternal life, *John* x. 27, 28. He brings them out of death, and gives them a ſavour and taſte of the life which is eternal. This was it which the apoſtles teſtified of, even of the life which was manifeſted in that body of fleſh of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt (1 *John* i. 2.); and they that turn from the darkneſs to his light, he gives them a taſte of the ſame life.

Thirdly, *They were made partakers of the Holy Ghoſt.*

The goſpel is a day of bringing forth the ſpiritual ſeed, and of pouring out the holy Spirit upon them. The law ſtate is a ſtate of ſervants; the goſpel of ſons! and becauſe true believers in Chriſt are ſons, *God ſent forth the*

Spirit

Spirit of his Son into their hearts to cry, Abba Father. And God cannot deny his own Spirit to his children that ask it of him; he knoweth how absolutely neceſſary it is to the ſtate of a ſon; and whoſoever truly receiveth Chriſt, *Chriſt doth give him power to become a ſon*; which power is in, and with, and cannot be ſeparated from, his Spirit. Yea, the Spirit of Chriſt is ſo neceſſary and inſeparable from him that is Chriſt's, that the apoſtle expreſly affirms, *that if any man hath not the Spirit of Chriſt, he is none of his*, Rom. viii. 9.

Fourthly, *They taſted of the good Word of God.*

Of that Word from which the gift comes; of that Word which was in the beginning of the world, which is ingrafted into the hearts of thoſe that truly believe; *which Word is able to ſave the ſoul.*

Fifthly, *They taſted of the powers of the world to come.*

Of the power of the endleſs life, whereof Chriſt is the miniſter, and according to which he miniſters life, in that holy, true, living, inward, ſpiritual temple, which he pitcheth and reareth up for an habitation to God in his own Spirit.

Now in the apoſtaſy and night of darkneſs, which hath come over the Chriſtian ſtate, theſe things have been greatly loſt. For there have been none that have been found able to turn people to that light which the apoſtle directed to. None could tell men where the light is to ſhine, and where men were to expect it, and wait for it. None were able to direct men to the ſeed of the kingdom within, to the Word of faith, the Word of the kingdom, nigh in the heart and mouth; much leſs were they able to inſtruct men how they might know and diſtinguiſh it from all other ſeeds, and the voice of the ſhepherd from all other voices. Here it came to paſs, that though at times God viſited and opened mens hearts, a little warming them by the breath which came from himſelf; yet they not knowing how to turn to the Lord, and wait upon him for preſervation in the gift and meaſure of his own grace, the good hath ſoon been ſtolen away from them, and the building which hath been raiſed up in them hath not been a building of life according to the Spirit, but a building of wiſdom or knowledge concerning the things of God according to the fleſh; and ſo the building that hath been raiſed up in mens ſpirits hath been Babylon, inſtead of Sion.

But the Lord hath had a remnant all along the apoſtaſy, who felt ſome begettings of life, and had in meaſure ſome ſenſe and taſte of the heavenly things. Theſe mourned after that ſtate which was once enjoyed, and felt their want of it, travelling from mountain to hill, ſeeking their reſting-place, which none could rightly inform them of. Now, for the ſakes of theſe, God hath at length appeared.

How appeared? may ſome ſay.

Why thus: he who is light hath appeared inwardly, cauſing his light to ſhine inwardly, cauſing his life to ſpring inwardly; ſo that he who is light, who is life, who is truth, is felt and known in his own inward viſits, breakings

ings-forth, and appearances. For God, who is a Spirit, his appearance is ſpiritual, his day is ſpiritual, his kingdom is ſpiritual, his light is ſpiritual, his life is ſpiritual, his day-ſtar is ſpiritual; and his day dawneth, and his day-ſtar ariſeth in the heart. Thus *the day-ſpring from on high did viſit us, who ſat in darkneſs, and in the region of the ſhadow of death.* And here we have met with what the apoſtles met with, the very ſame light of life, the very ſame enlightening Spirit and power, and have been enlightened by it, and taſted of the ſame gift.

The very ſame grace that appeared to them, and taught them, hath appeared to us, and taught us; and of it we have learned the ſame leſſons, in the ſame covenant of life wherein they learned; and now can we ſeal to their teſtimony in the ſame Spirit wherein they gave it forth, and witneſs to the ſame eternal life, and the ſame holy oil and anointing, our eyes having been opened and kept open by it. And though there be great diſputes about our teſtimony in this our day (and the preſent profeſſors riſe up againſt *us*, as the former profeſſors did againſt *them*); yet let but any man come rightly to diſtinguiſh in himſelf between that which God begets in the heart, and all other births, and let that ſpeak and judge in them, that will ſoon confeſs that our teſtimony is of God, and given forth in the authority and by the commiſſion of his own Spirit. True wiſdom is juſtified by the children that are born of her; it is the other birth that doth not, nor can own her. The other birth can own former diſpenſations (according to the letter of them); but not the life and power of the preſent.

I have known the breaking down of much in me by the powerful hand of the Lord, and a parting with much (though not too much) for Chriſt's ſake. The Lord hath brought the day of diſtreſs and inward judgment over my heart; he hath ariſen to ſhake terribly the earthly part in me (yea, what if I ſhould ſay that the powers of heaven have been ſhaken alſo), that he might make me capable to receive and bring me into that kingdom which cannot be ſhaken. And now that which God hath ſhaken, and removed in me, I ſee others build upon, and they think it ſhall never be ſhaken in them; but ſuch know not the day of the Lord, nor the terrible ſearching of his pure light, nor the operation of his power, which will not ſpare in one, what he hath reproved, condemned, ſhaken, and overturned in another. He that knows the living ſtone within, and comes to him as to a living ſtone, and is built upon the revelation of his Spirit, life, and power (revealed inwardly againſt the power of darkneſs) is not deceived. All that otherwiſe build (I mean upon an outward knowledge concerning Chriſt, and not upon his inward life) their building will not be able to ſtand in the day of the Lord. I wiſh they might have a ſenſe of it in time, that they might not periſh for ever; but experience that life and power of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which redeemeth and preſerveth out of the periſhing ſtate for ever and ever. *Amen.*

THE

THE ANTIENT

PRINCIPLE of TRUTH:

OR,

The LIGHT WITHIN Aſſerted,

AND

Held forth according to true Experience, and the faithful Teſtimony of the SCRIPTURES:

In the ANSWERS to FOUR QUESTIONS.

I. What this Light is which we teſtify of, and what is the nature of it?

II. What it doth inwardly in the Heart?

III. How it cometh to be lighted, ſet up, and increaſed there?

IV. How it cometh to be diminiſhed or extinguiſhed in any?

ALSO

An APPEAL

TO THE

WITNESS of GOD in all CONSCIENCES,

Which is the MORE SURE WORD of PROPHECY?

The Teſtimony of the SCRIPTURES without, or the Voice and Teſtimony of the Light and Spirit of GOD within, in the Heart.

By one once greatly diſtreſſed, but now at length, in the tender Mercy of the Lord, effectually Viſited and Redeemed by the Light and Power of Truth,

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THE PREFACE.

THE true miniſters of the goſpel, the miniſters of the new covenant, were ordained and appointed by God to be miniſters of light, miniſters of righteouſneſs, miniſters of the Spirit, *Matt.* v. 14. 2 *Cor.* xi. 15. *Ephe.* iii. 6. And this was their work and ſervice, even to preach the light, to deliver their meſſage concerning the light, which they heard of Chriſt, and were ſent by him to preach, as is recorded 1 *John* i. 5. So that they were to tell men what the light was, and where it was to be found; and to turn men from darkneſs to light, from ſin and unrighteouſneſs to purity and righteouſneſs, from the ſpirit and power of Satan to the Spirit and power of the living God (*Dan.* xii. 3. *Acts* xxvi. 18.) that ſo they might come from under Satan's authority, power, and kingdom of darkneſs, into the light, wherein Chriſt reigns as king, prieſt, and prophet, unto and over all his; who is faithful in all his houſe, and Son and Lord of all, diſtributing life, righteouſneſs, mercy, and peace to his whole family, as they abide in him, and walk in ſubjection to his Spirit. So that there is no condemnation to them that are gathered unto Chriſt, ingrafted into him, and who abide in him (walking not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit), who is the quickener, guide, and rule of all the children of the new covenant. For Chriſt is the way, the truth, and the life, in and to them all, and is made by God all in all unto them. He is their ſhepherd, their king, their captain, their vine, their olive-tree, their leader, their door, their path, their rule, their righteouſneſs, their holineſs, their wiſdom, their redemption, their altar, their ſacrifice, their prieſt, their prophet, their ſabbath, their light, their day-ſpring, their bright and morning-ſtar, their ſun, their ſhield, their rock, and their high tower.

What ſhall I ſay? God hath gathered together all things into One, even in him, whoſe Spirit, life, and light eternal is the One ſubſtance, which anſwers all the figures and ſhadows of the law, and they are all comprehended, and fulfilled, and end in him. So that he is the end of the law for

or righteouſneſs, to all that believe in him. And he miniſters righteouſneſs, he miniſters truth, he miniſters life, he miniſters ſalvation, he miniſters power, he miniſters pure heavenly wiſdom; and no good thing will he with-hold from them that come unto him in the drawings of his Father, and follow him whitherſoever he leads, and obey his goſpel, which is everlaſtingly new and living.

Now, this precious miniſtry hath been withdrawn, and hid from ages and generations, in the long night of the great apoſtaſy and thick darkneſs. And how could it be otherwiſe? For men being in the dark, and having erred from the true Spirit, and let in a wrong ſpirit, and built up wrong churches; and having not known the true wilderneſs (nor being willing to flee into it) whither the true church fled, and was nouriſhed by God with the true food, even with the true living virtue and nouriſhment, all this dark night of the apoſtaſy; I ſay, how could they come at the true light, the true Spirit, the true power (from which the true miniſtry is), which did not viſibly now appear, but was with the true church in the wilderneſs? So that there hath been a true church all this while, which the gates of hell have not been able to prevail againſt, as to her inward temple and altar (nor over the worſhippers which have worſhipped therein), although they have gained the outward court; God having ſevered it from his inward building, and given it to the Gentiles in ſpirit; who are not true Jews, who are not worſhippers in the Spirit, and in the truth, *Rev.* xxi. 1, 2.

But now, at length, bleſſed be the Lord, the long night of darkneſs draws towards an end; yea, is come to an end in many ſpirits; and the true light is broken forth again (and ſhineth again inwardly in many), and the true miniſtry is revived again, and the everlaſting goſpel (the everlaſting covenant of life, mercy, and ſalvation, in and through Chriſt Jeſus, the light and life of men) preached again. For now it is not only outwardly read, *that God is light*; but the meſſage hath been received, and perſons choſen, and ſent forth by God to publiſh it; and to turn men from darkneſs to light, and from Satan's power to God. And, bleſſed be the Lord, the publiſhing of this precious teſtimony (in the power and authority of the Moſt High) hath not been in vain. But the captivity of many hath been broken by the power of light, and the power and ſtrength of darkneſs (inwardly) overturned by it. Oh! how hath the ſtrong man, which kept the houſe, before the ſtronger than he appeared in the name and authority of his Father; I ſay, how hath he trembled at the inward and ſpiritual appearance of him that was ſtronger than he? And how have the pillars of the old building been ſhaken? How hath the witneſs of God been reached to in mens ſpirits? How have the dead been raiſed, the blind eye opened, the deaf ear unſtopped, the dumb tongue looſed, the lame cauſed to leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb to ſing, the inward ſpiritual leproſy cleanſed, and done away for ever, the wounded healed, the broken-

hearted bound up? And what hath not the Lord done inwardly and ſpiritually for his people, who have been ſenſible of his appearance, and gathered by his Spirit and power to the true Shiloh, who is the true Shepherd, the land of the living, the holy city and temple, the light of the city, the life of the city, the gates and wall of the city, the king and kingdom both? For his life, his nature, his Spirit is All, and in All. Ah! what do we deſire to have, but Chriſt the ſeed, and this ſeed ſown in our hearts and abiding in us, and his life, righteouſneſs and glory, his holy power, dominion, and kingdom, ſpringing up in it? And as, in the apoſtles days, there was the ſeal to their teſtimony in peoples hearts, where their miniſtry was ordered by the Lord, and was received; even ſo it is now. Oh! how doth the witneſs anſwer in mens hearts and conſciences! And they that keep to the witneſs, and its teſtimony, not hearkening after words to the wiſdom of the fleſh; how do they become living epiſtles, to be ſeen and read of all men, as the Lord pleaſeth to open that eye in any, which can ſee and read.

Now, to be often teſtifying of this light (which the Lord hath viſited us with, and wherein we experience the knowledge of his Son, and redemption by him), to us it is not grievous; and it is good and ſafe for others. Therefore, it ariſing in my heart, in the ſpringings of life, and lying upon me (as in the ſight of the Lord) to give forth this further ſhort teſtimony, for the ſakes of ſuch as have any deſire to know and experience the truth, as it is in Jeſus; I am given up in ſpirit to ſerve my God therein; and do give it forth in humility, in fear, in tenderneſs of ſpirit, in true love, with breathings to my God, that he would pleaſe to open the hearts of thoſe that ſhall be inclined to read it, that they may feel ſomewhat of that in themſelves, from which the teſtimony came; and ſo there-from may hear, in true ſenſe and underſtanding, the true and good report of the ſound of life and ſalvation in this our age, and may learn ſo to turn inwardly from the darkneſs to the light, from the power of Satan to God's Spirit and appearance inwardly, that the arm of the Lord may be revealed in them, and powerfully ſtretched out for them.

And this is the precious knowledge of Chriſt indeed, even to know Chriſt the power of God, Chriſt the wiſdom of God, inwardly revealed and working in the heart, deſtroying ſin there, and building up the holy building, wherein he himſelf will dwell and reign. Oh! that all that truly breathe after him, might not be with-held from him (and his living teſtimony, and inward appearance) by the power of darkneſs and deceit, which works ſubtilly in the heart againſt the appearance, power, and work of the Lord there, but might thus come to know him! Amen.

THE

THE ANCIENT PRINCIPLE of TRUTH; OR, The LIGHT WITHIN Aſſerted, &c.

QUESTION I.

WHAT is this Light, which we ſo earneſtly teſtify of, and whereof we affirm, That all men are (or have been) in ſome meaſure enlightened by it? And what is the nature of it?

ANSWER.

It is that which ſhineth from God in the heart, wherein God is near to men; and wherein and whereby men may ſeek after God, and find him.

God is a Spirit; and his Spirit and preſence is near to all men. *Whither ſhall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither ſhall I flee from thy preſence?* Pſal. cxxxix. 7, &c. It is impoſſible for any ſo to do. For God, who is a Spirit (and the Father of ſpirits), is nigh to every ſpirit. Every ſpirit depends upon him the fountain of ſpirits; and hath its being, life, and motion from him, and in him, after a ſenſe; though not after ſuch a ſenſe, as they who are quickened by him experience.

Now God, who is light, being ſo near every man, doth he never ſhine upon them? They are darkneſs; but doth he never appear in the darkneſs? He who is light, loveth mankind; doth he never viſit them with his love? He knoweth what and how great inward and ſpiritual enemies mankind have; doth he never make any diſcoveries of their enemies to them? Yes; the light is near all mankind, to diſcover to them, and help them againſt the darkneſs; and the love is near to help them againſt the enmity which deſtroyeth, and ſo to ſave them. For whoſoever joineth to the light of God's Spirit, cannot but witneſs ſalvation thereby; for it is of a ſaving nature,

nature, and bringeth ſalvation with it to all that receive it. Chriſt is in it, and is known by it (inwardly, ſpiritually, livingly known), and he is not, nor can be known without it. He that knoweth the light of God's Spirit, knoweth Chriſt; and he that believeth in it, believeth in him; and he that knoweth not, nor believeth therein, neither knoweth nor believeth in Chriſt. So that as the Jews circumciſion outward, and their knowledge and thinking to be juſtified by the righteouſneſs and works of the law (which moſt of them brake, and were tranſgreſſors of; though Paul ſaid, he was, *touching the righteouſneſs which is in the law, blameleſs*); I ſay, as this was diſowned, and denied by Chriſt and his apoſtles; and the circumciſion, and work of God on the hearts of the Gentiles ſet over it, and exalted above it, as *Rom.* ii. ſo is it now alſo. The knowledge of thoſe, and belief of thoſe who own the light, and believe in the light, is owned by God's Spirit (in this our day) for the true believing in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and for that knowledge which is life eternal; and the knowing, and believing on him, as men account it, according to their apprehenſions of the letter, without this, is reckoned with God for ignorance and unbelief.

So that in this is God known, in this is Chriſt believed in. Here God draws nigh to every man, and is a God not afar off, but nigh at hand; and his ſalvation is nigh, and his righteouſneſs ready to be revealed here; and here every man may ſeek after and obtain the knowledge of him, the ſaving knowledge, the knowledge of the grace, of the gift of grace which brings ſalvation. In this is the Son kiſſed, in this is he drawn nigh to, and come to by the ſoul, and not out of it. Here are the drawings of the Father felt. Let any man feel this, he feels that which begets to God; he feels that which comes from the Son, is of the nature of the Son, wherein the Father draws the heart of the child whom he begets, to the Son. And in this as the ſoul comes, it comes out of the darkneſs wherein Chriſt is not nor dwells, into the light wherein Chriſt is with the Father; and ſo in this the ſoul is ever near, and out of it ſtill afar off. In this is the holy root witneſſed, and the ingrafting thereinto; out of this the holy root is not known, nor can men underſtand what it is to be ingrafted into him, and how he is an olive-tree, a vine, a door, a ſhepherd, a leader, a captain, a redeemer. Nor can men poſſibly know the voice of the true ſhepherd from the voice of a ſtranger, till they come hither; nor how the true ſhepherd walks before his ſheep, and what it is to follow him out of that which deſtroys, into that which regenerates, makes new and living, till they come hither.

Now this inward light is abundantly teſtified of in the ſcriptures.

As firſt by Moſes, who ſpeaking of the other covenant, the new covenant, the covenant of circumciſing the heart, turneth or directeth the mind to this word or commandment nigh, whereby alone it can be done, as *Deut.*

Deut. xxx. And this was the reaſon why God ſo often commanded the Jews to circumciſe their hearts, and to waſh them and make them clean from their wicked ways and vain thoughts; becauſe Moſes had directed their minds to that, and that was near to them, wherein and whereby it might be done. In another place, he bids them make them a new heart, *Ezek.* xviii. 31. How could that be done? Why, by turning to God's Spirit which ſtrove with them, his power would effect it in them; and men are ſaid to purify their hearts, through the Spirit, in loving and obeying the truth which doth it, 1 *Peter* i. 22. *John* xvii. 17.

Secondly, By Job, who ſpeaks of God's candle ſhining upon his head, and of walking through darkneſs by his light, *chap.* xxix. 30. He ſpeaks likewiſe of thoſe that rebel againſt the light, that know not the ways thereof, nor abide in the paths thereof, *chap.* xxiv. 13.

Thirdly, By David, who by it ſaw through the types and ſhadows to the ſubſtance, and grew wiſer than his teachers, he knowing the word within, and having his candle lighted by it, ſo that he knew the inward law which converts the ſoul, and was led by God's light and truth ſhining in his inward parts, *Pſal.* xliii. 3.

Fourthly, By Solomon, *The commandment is a lamp, and the law light, and the reproofs of inſtruction the way of life*, Prov. vi. 23. Every one that experienceth the light, the law, the commandment within, knoweth it to be thus. Again ſaith he, *The path of the juſt is a ſhining light, that ſhineth more and more unto the perfect day*, chap. iv. 18. Juſt as a light, which ſhines outwardly, is to the outward man; ſuch is the inward light to the inward man; yea more: for inwardly the light and the way is all one. Chriſt is the way, the truth, and the life, which are three names of one and the ſame thing. And he that walks in the light, walks in the way of life and holineſs; which he that walks in the darkneſs walks out of. I ſhall mention but one place more, which is very differently rendered, it is *chap.* xx. 27. The new tranſlation renders it thus, *The ſpirit of man is the candle of the Lord, ſearching all the inward parts of the belly.* The old thus, *The light of the Lord is the breath of man, and ſearcheth all the bowels of the belly.* The heart of man (the unregenerate mind, the unregenerate ſpirit), is deceitful above all things and deſperately wicked; that whereby God ſearcheth it, is his light, his candle, his own Holy Spirit.

Fifthly, By the prophets, as Iſaiah, Jeremy, Ezekiel, Micah, *&c.* who ſaid, *He hath ſhewed thee, O man, what is good. And what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do juſtly, and to love mercy; and to humble thyſelf to walk with thy God?* chap. vi. 8. How doth God ſhew this to mankind, but by the inward light of his Spirit.

Sixthly, By John Baptiſt, who was the fore-runner, and teſtified of Chriſt as of the inward and ſpiritual baptizer, who had his fan in his hand. What is that? What doth Chriſt fan with? What doth he fan, and with what? The light within is a fan, the Spirit within is a ſpirit of judgment and burning;

ing; it ſcatters the darkneſs; yea, it conſumes and burns up the droſs and ſtubble there.

Seventhly, By Chriſt himſelf, who ſaid, *This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkneſs rather than light, becauſe their deeds were evil*, John iii. 19. Mark how Chriſt preached the light (the ſeed, the kingdom, the leaven), and bid men bring their deeds to it, and blamed them that did not, *ver.* 20, 21. How can there be an inward Jew, an inward circumciſion, without an inward law, inward light, and inward teſtimony? And to this inward law and teſtimony, muſt the inward Jew daily have recourſe, and bring his deeds thither, to be judged and ſcanned there.

Again, Chriſt ſaith, *I am the light of the world: he that followeth me ſhall not walk in darkneſs, but ſhall have the light of life*, chap. viii. 12. How is Chriſt the light of the world? Or how was Chriſt the light of the world? Was he only ſo, as he appeared in that body of fleſh? Is he not ſo in his inward and ſpiritual appearance? Is he not the univerſal light, the Sun of righteouſneſs, which enlighteneth the whole dark world? Yet again he ſaith, *Yet a little while is the light with you; walk while ye have the light, leſt darkneſs come upon you; for he that walketh in darkneſs, knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have the light believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light*, chap. xii. 33, 36. This is Chriſt's direction to men how they may become true believers; to wit, by believing in the light. The light ſhines in the darkneſs *(ye were darkneſs)*, and by believing in it, men become children of it.

Eighthly, By the apoſtles and evangeliſts. They were ſent to turn men from darkneſs to light, *Acts* xxvi. 18. and they teſtified of the light they were to turn men to; delivered their meſſage that God was light, and that in him was no darkneſs at all. They preached Chriſt the light, the life, the way, the truth; they turned men from Satan's ſpirit which is darkneſs, to God's Spirit which is light.

John the evangeliſt teſtified of *the word which was in the beginning*, and ſaid, *In him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light ſhineth in darkneſs, and the darkneſs comprehended it not*, chap. i. 4, 5. And again ſaith, ſpeaking of him, *That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world*, ver. 9.

Paul ſaith, *Whatſoever doth make manifeſt is light*, Epheſ. v. 3. Wherefore *awake thou that ſleepeſt, and ariſe from the dead*, ver. 14. for God hath ſent forth the light of his Son to rouſe thee. Again, he profeſſedly averreth, that the word nigh in the mouth and heart, was that word of faith which he preached, *Rom.* x. 8. If ſo, then that is the word of faith which is to be believed in, if men would believe in Chriſt, and be ſaved by him.

James ſpeaketh of God as the Father of Lights, from whom every good and perfect gift proceedeth, *chap.* i. 17. Then ſurely from him is the grace

grace, and the gift (the free gift) by grace, which is upon all to juſtification of life, that receive it, and follow the teachings of it.

Peter ſpeaks of the more ſure word of prophecy, to which men ſhould take heed; and wait (in taking heed to that) for the dawning of the day, and the ariſing of the day-ſtar in the heart, 2 *Peter* i. 19. Indeed, all men ought to wait for, and give heed to, the light of God's Holy Spirit, and the holy prophecies, warnings, and directions thereof in their hearts.

And John, at laſt, as I may ſay, in that book of the Revelation (cloſing up the teſtimony of that age and generation) ſpeaks of walking in the light of the Lamb, *chap.* xxi. 23, 24. (which every one that comes to witneſs the true light ought to do, elſe there is no true fellowſhip with God, nor with his ſanctified ones, who are gathered into and walk in the light, even as God is in the light, 1 *John* i. 7.) And the angel that opened the prophecies and myſteries of that book to John, ſaid, that *the teſtimony of Jeſus is the Spirit of prophecy*, chap. xix. 10. So then, he that hath this ſpirit of prophecy, he that hath this inward light, hath the teſtimony of Jeſus; but he that hath it not, hath not the teſtimony itſelf, but only words concerning the teſtimony. For this is the diſtinction between the true believer and the falſe: the true believer hath the ſpirit of prophecy, the witneſs in himſelf, 1 *John* v. 10.: the falſe believer hath but the outward teſtimony or relation of things; but not the inward ſubſtance, the covenant and law of life within.

QUESTION II.

What doth this light do inwardly in the hearts of thoſe that receive it, believe in it, and give up to it?

ANSWER.

It doth all that is requiſite to be done, from the ſoul's coming out of ſpiritual Egypt into the land of reſt; and all that is needful for its growth and preſervation there.

Firſt, It enlighteneth. It ſheweth what is evil, and alſo what is good, according to the meaſure and proportion of it, and according to God's cauſing it to ſhine in the heart. It diſcovers the myſtery of darkneſs, the myſtery of ungodlineſs, the myſtery of iniquity, the myſtery of deceit in all its myſterious workings; for nothing is hid from the light of him with whom we have to do. And it alſo diſcovers the myſtery of godlineſs, the myſtery of holineſs, the pure way and commandment of life; and gives all the believers (the true believers in Chriſt) this experience, that *his commandment is life everlaſting*. There is nothing the heart needs deſire to know of God, but this makes it manifeſt in the due ſeaſon. It opens the very myſtery of the ſcriptures, gives the right underſtanding and

application of the promiſes, and fulfils the prophecies thereof in the heart.

Secondly, It doth not only manifeſt the good and evil, but likewiſe inclines the mind to chuſe the good, and refuſe the evil. It draws from the evil, and towards the good; yea, and the ſoul is made willing in the day of him who is light, and who appears in the light, and reveals his power there. There is a way, an high-way, ſpoken of, *Iſa.* xxxv. 8. called the way of holineſs, which the unclean can neither diſcern nor paſs over to; but the light of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the meaſure of grace and truth wherewith he enlightens men, ſo manifeſts and leads into this way, that they that are taught and guided by him, ſhall walk therein, and not err.

Thirdly, It ſcatters the darkneſs, breaks the power of the enemy; it makes one with him who is all power, and giveth to partake thereof; ſo that power is given to become ſons in the light, to the children of the light; power given to become kings and prieſts to God; power given to reign in the dominion of his life, in the dominion of his truth, over ſin, over death, over deceit; and to offer up the holy living ſacrifices to God.

What ſhall I ſay? It is one with Chriſt, it is of his heavenly Spirit and nature, it makes way for him, it leads to him, it fills with him, it brings into unity and fellowſhip both with the Father and the Son, where the peace which paſſeth underſtanding, and the joy unſpeakable and full of glory, abounds. This is the goſpel meſſage, that God is light; and they that are gathered into and abide in this light, they are gathered into, and abide in unity and fellowſhip, both with the Father and the Son.

David had great ſenſe, and great experience of this light of God's Holy Spirit, and of his truth ſent forth, manifeſted, and revealed in his inward parts, as is ſignified, *Pſal.* li. 6. and again, in that vehement prayer of his, *Pſal.* xliii. 3. *Oh! ſend out thy light and thy truth; let them lead me, let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles. Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God the gladneſs of my joy; yea, upon the harp will I praiſe thee, O God, my God.* Indeed when the light ſhines, and the truth ſprings up in the heart, it leads to him that is true, it leads to the holy hill and mountain of the Lord, and to the inward altar; which they have no right to, who ſerve and worſhip at the outward; and the harp is known whereon the Moſt High is praiſed, even that inward harp, whereof David's outward harp was but the figure. Therefore they that come to the holy hill of God, to the mountain of the Lord's houſe, and to that holy building which was reared there, they invite and encourage others to walk in that light which led them thither, wherein communion with God, and one with another, and the bleſſings of life and peace are enjoyed, *Iſa.* ii. 5.

But what ſhould I ſpeak of the ſufficiency of the light and grace of the Spirit of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, or of what it is able to do, and of what he is pleaſed to work by it? I ſhall only ſay this, that as the fullneſs was enough for Chriſt, and to fit him for the work which he had to do; ſo the meaſure

meaſure of grace and truth which he beſtows, is enough for every man. *My grace is ſufficient for thee*, ſaid God to Paul; and ſo it is for every man. There is no want of ſufficiency in the grace of God, in the ſeed of the kingdom, in the pearl of price, in the holy leaven, in the heavenly ſalt; but the virtue and ſtrength of it is greater than the enemy is able to withſtand; and he that keeps to it, and departs not from it, ſhall feel life and power ſpringing up in it, to quicken him and carry him through all that God requires of him. For the water which Chriſt gives is a well, ſpringing up (in him to whom it is given) unto life eternal; and this water is able to waſh, able to nouriſh, able to fill the ſoul with living virtue, which waiteth for it and partaketh of it. And all the nations of them that are ſaved, are to walk in the light of God's Spirit. To this men are to be turned, unto this they are to be gathered, into this they are to be tranſlated (even from the kingdom of darkneſs, into the Son's marvellous light); and being changed by it (into its nature) become light in the Lord, and ought to walk in the light, as God is in the light, 1 *John* i. 7.

QUESTION III.

How doth the mind come to be enlightened, and the candle of the Lord come to be ſet up in the ſoul?

ANSWER.

By God's cauſing it to ſhine there, and the mind's being turned to it, and given up to be exerciſed by it, as it pleaſeth the Lord to cauſe it to ſhine.

The power of the Lord reacheth to the pure principle of life and light in the heart, in the ſeaſons of his good pleaſure. This being reached to and touched by the Lord, anſwers his touch, his viſit, his call; and the mind being turned to it, ſenſible of it, and willing to let it into its nature and ſpirit, and to become one with it, (ſuffering with it, and bearing its croſs); the ſeed cometh to grow there, the light which was hid and overwhelmed under the earth (under the earthly wiſdom, the earthly will, the earthly knowledge, the earthly deſires, the earthly delights, *&c.*), cometh to be lighted up there; yea, the life cometh to be quickened more and more, and the holy leaven to ſpread more and more there. And this ſenſible plant of God's renown being thus entertained, and being not afterwards grieved, deſpiſed, quenched, or hurt, by the giving way to, and letting in of that which is contrary to it, it ſhooteth up into a kingdom of righteouſneſs, into a tree of righteouſneſs, within the compaſs whereof, and under the ſhadow whereof, the ſoul ſitteth down in peace and reſt, and is defended and nouriſhed with that which is pure and living, and full of the pure ſap and virtue, and ſo becomes ſtrong in the Lord, and in the

power of his might, againſt the power and ſtrength of darkneſs. Now this all men may experience (at firſt in ſome low meaſure and degree, and afterwards more and more), as they come to feel after, and have a ſenſe of that which is of God, and good in the heart, and come to join and give up to it. For then it will be working againſt, and purging out, that which is of a contrary nature, and overſpreading the heart with its own nature; inſomuch as that which was the leaſt will become the greateſt; and that which was the loweſt of all (and indeed trampled under foot) will riſe up into dominion and power over all, and bring all under. So that the lofty city, the lofty building of fleſhly wiſdom, and of ſin and iniquity in the heart, will be laid low, and the feet of the ſeed ſhall tread it down; even the feet of that which was once poor and needy, until it was anointed, and its horn exalted by the Lord.

QUESTION IV.

How is the light or candle of the Lord diminiſhed, and at length extinguiſhed or put out in ſome? Or how cometh that about?

ANSWER.

By their neglecting, deſpiſing, quenching it; hearkening and giveing way to the contrary ſpirit in its motions and temptations. For as the good let in, ſtops and works out the evil; ſo the evil let in, ſtops and works out the good: ſo the Philiſtine nature given way to, ſtops the inward well which Jacob had digged and opened. There is a time when life is a myſtery, a fountain ſealed; and there is a time wherein God unſeals the fountain, and opens the myſtery in the heart. Oh! then great care is to be had, and the ſoul is to lie very low in the pure fear, that it may continue in his goodneſs, and walk worthy of his love, that the fountain may be kept open, and the pure ſprings of the Holy Land flow, and not be ſealed and ſhut up again. For there are ſome that rebel againſt the light, and they dwell in a dry land. There were ſome that did always reſiſt and vex God's Spirit, and the Lord's Spirit ceaſed ſtriving with them, and gave them up to a reprobate ſenſe and judgment concerning the things of God. There are ſome that do not improve God's good talent, and from them that which was once given is again taken away. Yea, the candle of the wicked ſhall one time or other be put out, and they ſhall be ſilent in darkneſs, and their mouth ſtopped from having any thing to ſay againſt God, his truth, and people, for evermore. And all men had need to take heed how they be wanton with the grace of God, or deſpiſe the day of their viſitation by the holy light of God's Spirit; for if God take away the talent, if God put out the inward candle, who can light it again? Oh! how did poor David, the man after God's own heart, ſuffer by letting the enemy's temptations in upon him! *Caſt me not away from thy preſence*, ſaid he, *and take not thy Holy Spirit from me.* Indeed he did loſe his condition

tion at the preſent, and he ſpeaks as a man in danger of being quite undone; though afterwards he came to comfort and aſſurance that God would reſtore him to the joy of his ſalvation, and light his candle, and enlighten his darkneſs again.

But I am not inſenſible of what doubts and diſputes there are in mens minds about this teſtimony which we give (from certain knowledge and true experience) concerning the light wherewith God enlighteneth ſouls. At firſt, when the teſtimony firſt came forth, men would not grant ſuch a thing as a light from God in men, which convinced of and reproved for ſin; but now there are many will aſſent to that, who yet cannot believe it to be a meaſure of the grace and truth which comes by Jeſus Chriſt, and that in it the ſufficiency and power of God is revealed, againſt the ſtrength and power of Satan. But let ſuch ſeriouſly conſider,

Firſt, Who they are that have teſtified, and teſtify, of this light. They are perſons who generally have been deeply exerciſed in religion: perſons who have read the ſcriptures very diligently, with much praying and waiting upon God, for the true, certain, and clear underſtanding of them: perſons who (ſeveral of them) have had experience of moſt (if not all other) ſeparated ways, but could never meet with the anſwer of the cry of their ſouls, nor with ſatisfaction to that birth which breathed in them after the Lord night and day.

Secondly, What their teſtimony is; which is manifold. As firſt, that they were by the Lord (even by his Holy Spirit, and the ſhinings and ſpringings of his precious ſeed in them) turned to this light, and ſhewn it to be of God. Secondly, That in turning to it, they ſtill meet with the preſence, appearance, and power of the Lord working in their hearts. Thirdly, That it did not only diſcover ſin to them, but alſo powerfully reſiſt it, fight againſt it, and bring it under; which no light and power beſides the light and power of God's Spirit can do. Fourthly, That the life of the Son is manifeſted and revealed in it, and they come therein truly to ſee, and taſte, and handle the Word of eternal life. Fifthly, That in this light they come to witneſs cleanſing by the blood of the Lamb, and the everlaſting covenant made with them (even the ſure mercies of David), and the holy precious promiſes fulfilled in them, whereby they are made partakers of the divine nature, and come to witneſs an entrance into the holy city, and drink of the ſtreams of the pure cryſtal river, which refreſh and make glad the city of our God, and all the tabernacles wherein he dwells. Laſtly, To mention no more, the Lord hath ſhewn them how this had been formerly with them, even in the days of their former profeſſion; and how God had wrought by this in them in former times, though they then knew it not; and that all their ability then to underſtand any thing of God aright, or to pray unto him, or reap any true benefit from the ſcriptures, was through the ſtirring of this in them, whereby God even then, in ſome meaſure, enlightened and quickened their minds. For there being ſuch a principle

ciple in man, it works variously, and many times when he is not aware of it: and he hath benefit thereby, if he reſiſt it not, but receive its influence and operation, though he hath not the ſtricteſt knowledge and diſcerning of it.

Thirdly, Again conſider whether the light of Chriſt's Spirit, or the grace and truth which is come by Jeſus Chriſt, hath not this property of diſcovering, convincing, and reproving for ſin. Doubtleſs the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus, in the loweſt miniſtration of it, is of that nature, that it diſcovereth and fighteth againſt the law of ſin and death, where-ever it finds it. And whether the Comforter, the Holy Spirit of truth, who leads out of all error and falſhood, and into all truth, is not as well to be known by this, even by his convincing the world of ſin, and inwardly reproving for ſin, as by his comforting of the ſaints, in their holy travels out of ſin, and battles againſt ſin.

Conſider, Fourthly, whether any thing can convince of ſin but the light of God's Holy Spirit ſhining in the heart? There may be an outward declaration of ſin by the law outward; but it never reacheth the heart and conſcience but by the ſhining of the light inward. Nay, it cannot ſo much as reach to the underſtanding, but as God opens the heart, and brings home the conviction by his light and power. This we have experience of in the Jews; who though the prophets came with certain evidence and demonſtration from God's Spirit, yet they were not convinced thereby, but ſtood it out againſt the prophets, and juſtified themſelves againſt the voice and Word of the Lord; their eyes being cloſed, their ears ſhut, and hearts hardened againſt that of God in them, as may be read in *Jeremiah*, chap. ii. and divers other places, even to admiration. And what wickedneſs is ſo great which the hardened man will not plead for, and be defending and juſtifying himſelf in! Yea, if God do open mens underſtandings in ſome meaſure, ſo that they cannot but confeſs ſuch and ſuch things to be evil in general (as pride, covetouſneſs, drunkenneſs, riotouſneſs, exceſs in apparel, lying, ſwearing, *&c.*) yet they are not able to ſee the evil and danger of theſe things in and to themſelves, but have covers and excuſes to hide them, unleſs the inward light and Spirit of the Lord ſearch their hearts, and make them manifeſt to them.

Fifthly, Conſider the weight and proper tendency of theſe two ſcriptures, and do not form another meaning, and ſo put off the drift and intent of God's Holy Spirit in them. The firſt is that of the apoſtle, *Epheſ.* v. 13, 14. *But all things that are reproved, are made manifeſt by the light: for whatſoever doth make manifeſt, is light. Wherefore he ſaith, Awake, thou that ſleepeſt,* &c. Every man is bid to awake, becauſe every man hath ſome proportion of that in him, which (if hearkened to) will reprove, rouze up, and awaken him, and lead him from among the dead, to him who gives the light, and cauſeth it to ſhine in him, even in the midſt of his darkneſs and corruption, that it might awaken him out of it. The other ſcripture is that of *Gal.* v. 27. where

where the apoſtle ſpeaks of the fleſh luſting againſt the Spirit, and the Spirit againſt the fleſh, and theſe two are contrary. Did not God's Spirit ſtrive with the old world; not only with the ſons of God, who had corrupted themſelves, but with the reſt alſo? And what is it that hath ſtriven with wicked men ſince, and that doth ſtrive with wicked men ſtill? Is it not the ſame good Spirit? What is it alſo that inwardly reſiſts and luſts againſt the will and ſtrivings of God's Spirit? Is it not the fleſh? So here are the two ſeeds, the two principles (which are contrary one to the other) near man. For there is the creature man (which of right is the Lord's) into whom the deſtroyer hath gained entrance, and in whom he rules by the law of ſin and death. Now he who made man, ſeeketh after him, and findeth out his enemy in man, and giveth forth a law againſt him inwardly in the heart; which, ſo far as any man gives ear to, believes, and receives, there ariſeth preſently a fight and ſtriving between theſe two contrary principles in him, ſo that this man cannot do the things that he would. Now that which thus ſtrives againſt ſin in any man, and troubles him becauſe of ſin, reproving and condemning him for it, that is of another nature than the fleſh (which harbours ſin) and contrary to it.

Laſtly, Conſider the great love of God to mankind, and the great care he hath of them. Firſt, as touching their bodies; how doth he provide for the bodies of all mankind! He would have none hurt, none deſtroyed; but feedeth all, nouriſheth all, making plentiful proviſion, and giving fruitful ſeaſons; cauſing his ſun to ſhine, and his rain to deſcend on all. Then as to their ſouls, he knoweth the preciouſneſs thereof, and what the loſs of a ſoul is; yea, he knoweth how eager the devourer is to deſtroy, and ſetteth himſelf againſt him. He is the Father of ſpirits, and his Son the Shepherd and biſhop of ſouls, whoſe nature it is to gather and ſave; and it is ſaid expreſly of God, by the teſtimony of the Spirit of truth, that he would have all to be ſaved, and come to the knowledge of the truth. And whereas it was ſaid to the Jews, that God was as the potter, and they as the clay, and he could make them veſſels either of honour or diſhonour at his pleaſure, *Jer.* xviii. 6. yet it was to this end, even to invite and encourage them to be ſubject to him, that they might be made veſſels of honour by him, as appears *ver.* 11.

Now conſider, if God be as tender of ſouls as of the bodies of men, doth he not make proviſion for the ſoul as well as for the body? Would he not have the ſoul live, and would he not have the ſoul fed as well as the body? If ſo, then needs muſt the light of his Holy Spirit ſhine inwardly throughout all nations, and the ſaving grace and power be manifeſt every-where, even in every heart, in ſome meaſure, and the fleſh and blood of the Son of God (which is the ſoul's food) be diſtributed to all. And truly the Lord is not an hard maſter to any (as the unprofitable ſervant, in every diſpenſation, is ready to account of him); for the times of ignorance and darkneſs God winketh at, or paſſeth over, being very tender towards men in that eſtate;

eſtate; yea, a little that is of him turned to and heeded, according to the meaſure of underſtanding that God gives, will be owned and accepted, even in the midſt of a great deal of darkneſs and evil working againſt it.

There was a time before the law (for the law was given by Moſes): what ſaved then? Was it any thing but the ſaving grace, the ſaving light, the ſaving Spirit, the holy anointing? Could any be ſaved but thereby?

What ſaved under the law? Did the ſhadows then ſave, or the ſubſtance of life veiled under them? Did not the Spirit then work inwardly, redeem inwardly, ſave inwardly? Did not the word or commandment nigh in the mouth and heart (to which Moſes, by God's direction, had turned their minds) enlighten and ſave inwardly?

And any of the Gentiles, as the Word or Spirit of life did work in them, did it not circumciſe inwardly, and ſave them alſo? So that though they had not the law or miniſtration of Moſes outward, yet they had the inward writing from God on their hearts, and ſhewed the work and efficacy of it there, and ſhall at laſt be juſtified by, and according to, the everlaſting goſpel, which juſtifieth all whatſoever, ſo far as in any meaſure they receive and are ſubject to the light and law of God's pure Spirit, which the carnal mind cannot receive, nor be ſubject to.

Oh! that men could die to themſelves, even to their own wiſdom and prudence, and not lean to their own underſtandings, nor idolize their own apprehenſions and conceivings, but wait to receive underſtanding from God, who giveth liberally of the true wiſdom to thoſe that aſk and wait aright! And how doth God give true wiſdom and underſtanding? Is it not by the ſhining of his light in the heart? Oh! that men were turned inwardly thither, and inwardly dead to that wiſdom and prudence from which God ever hid things, and ever will! He that will be truly wiſe, muſt firſt become a fool, that he may be wiſe; that is, he muſt not ſtrive to learn in the comprehenſive way of man's wiſdom and prudence the things of God's kingdom; but feel the begettings of life in his heart, and in that receive ſomewhat of the new and heavenly underſtanding, and ſo die to the other, and know no more the things of God after the fleſh; that is, as a wiſe man, as a learned ſcribe, as a great diſputant (for where is the wiſe? Where is the ſcribe? Where is the diſputer of this world? Can they find out the myſtery of life, the myſtery of God's kingdom in this age, any more than they could in former ages?) but become a babe, a fool, and ſo receive and bow to that which his own wiſdom will call fooliſhneſs, and account weakneſs; but the other birth, which is begotten and born of God, will know, and daily experience, to be the wiſdom and power of God unto ſalvation.

AN

A N

A P P E A L

TO THE

WITNESS of GOD in all CONSCIENCES,

WHICH IS THE

More ſure Word of PROPHECY? The Teſtimony of the SCRIPTURES without; or the Voice and Teſtimony of the Light and Spirit of GOD within, in the Heart.

THE apoſtle Peter ſpeaks of a more ſure word of prophecy (or a more ſure prophetical word, as the Greek hath it) than that voice which came from heaven, which they heard when they were with Chriſt in the holy mount, 2 *Pet.* i. 18, 19. Now what this more ſure word is, which ought to be given heed to in the moſt eſpecial manner, more than to ſuch an eminent voice and teſtimony from heaven, even from the excellent glory, is a very great and weighty queſtion. Now ſome affirm, that it is the word and teſtimony of the ſcriptures without; others affirm, that it is the voice, ſound, and teſtimony of the Word of Life within.

I do not know a ſcripture that my heart hath more been tenderly ſolicitous about, deſiring to give due honour both to the Spirit of God, and to the holy ſcriptures, and alſo to underſtand what the Lord would have me in the moſt eſpecial manner give heed to, until the ſeaſon came from him, in which he ſhould cauſe the day to dawn, and the day-ſtar to ariſe in my heart. And now, that others might come to the ſame underſtanding and ſatisfaction alſo, are theſe following conſiderations propoſed in the weight of my ſpirit to them.

Firſt, Conſider how ſure the word of prophecy was, how ſure the voice and teſtimony from heaven was; than which, the apoſtle directs them to ſomewhat as more ſure. This I may clearly ſay of it, it was undoubtedly from God, and that in a very extraordinary manner, even in Chriſt's preſence, when Moſes and Elias were with him, and God beſtowing upon him honour and glory, transfiguring him before his diſciples, cauſing his face to ſhine as the ſun, and making his raiment white as the light, *Matt.* xvii. 2.

And the intent of it was to give the diſciples full evidence and ſatisfaction (~~for the voice was not for his ſake, but for theirs~~), ~~or rather that they might~~ have a full ground, after his death and reſurrection, to teſtify for the ſatisfaction and confirmation of others; for till then they were to keep it ſecret, *ver.* 9. Now that which was provided for this end, doubtleſs was very ſure, and teſtified by them who were choſen to be faithful witneſſes in this reſpect.

Secondly, Conſider whether the teſtimony of the prophets concerning Chriſt were ſurer than the immediate voice from God himſelf? Were they ſurer to thoſe that lived in thoſe days, or to thoſe that ſhould come after, than this teſtimony was to the apoſtles, and to thoſe that did communicate it in the will and counſel of the Lord? The prophets did teſtify from God's holy unerring Spirit; but they that lived in thoſe days did not always believe and receive their prophecies, but ſometimes doubted of them, and queſtioned them: yea, their prophecies were not always evident, and clearly underſtood by thoſe who deſired to underſtand; but their viſions were many times a book ſealed, both to the learned and unlearned. But this teſtimony, this word of prophecy, this voice from the excellent glory (*This is my beloved Son, hear him*) is a very plain, evident, full teſtimony, eaſy to be underſtood by any in that preſent, or in after ages. And I muſt confeſs, as to myſelf, the reading of it did always deeply affect and ſatisfy my heart.

Thirdly, Conſider the manner of God's appearing to the prophets, and compare it with the manner of this appearance. God appeared to them ſometimes in viſions, ſometimes in dreams. Moſes ſaw a buſh burning, and heard a voice. *The viſion of Iſaiah, the ſon of Amos*, Iſai. i. 1. And *Ezekiel* ſaw viſions, *chap.* i. 1. And *Daniel* had a dream and viſions on his bed, *Dan.* vii. 1. And *Jeremiah* had that ſweet prophecy (of God's ſatisfying the weary ſoul, and repleniſhing every ſorrowful ſoul) in his ſleep, *Jer.* xxxi. 26. Now here to theſe bleſſed apoſtles was a viſion given of the glory of Chriſt, and of Moſes and Elias with him; not in the mind or head, as Daniel's viſions were, *Dan.* vii. 1.; but the excellent glory did appear, and Chriſt, Moſes, and Elias were really there together on the mount (which is more than a prophetic viſion of a thing), and Chriſt was cloathed with, and ſwallowed up in, the glory. For God the Father did ſet himſelf to glorify him, ſo as never man was glorified before; and the voice came (the certain voice; what voice could be more certain?) from the excellent glory, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed*, 2 Pet. i. 17. And this pure viſion of glory (even of God's thus appearing, and Chriſt's thus transfiguring) they ſaw, and heard the voice which came from heaven, when they were with him in the holy mount. Now were the prophecies of the prophets that Chriſt ſhould be born in Bethlehem, and that he ſhould be thus and thus, *&c.* equal to this in evidence and demonſtration? Why was John greater than the reſt of the prophets? Was it not in that he was choſen

choſen to be the immediate forerunner and preparer of the way, and could point with his finger to the Meſſiah? And yet is not this immediate teſtimony from the excellent glory greater than the teſtimony of John?

Fourthly, Conſider whether Chriſt's own words in the fleſh to his diſciples were ſurer than the voice from the excellent glory? If I ſhould extol the words of Chriſt in the fleſh above the words of the prophets which teſtified of him, ſhould I therein do the words and teſtimonies of the prophets any wrong? He was the Son; he had the fullneſs of life, the fullneſs of the Spirit, the great authority and virtue of God his Father. *God* (ſaith the apoſtle) *who at ſundry times, and in divers manners, ſpoke in time paſt unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in theſe laſt days ſpoken unto us by his Son*, Heb. i. 1, 2. ſeeming to exalt and magnify God's ſpeaking by his Son, and the way of this miniſtration above the miniſtration of the prophets (which miniſtration was firſt by him in the fleſh, afterwards in Spirit, which is properly called the miniſtration of the Spirit, 2 *Cor.* iii. 8.). Now conſider whether this ſure word of prophecy from the excellent glory, ſo immediately from the majeſty on high, was not intended by him as a ſeal to the faith of the diſciples, as a ſeal to Chriſt's appearance in the fleſh, and to what he had taught them (which was ſometimes in parables, and not ſo fully underſtood by them); and whether this was not more bright, more raviſhing, more certain, more eſtabliſhing, than his common preſence and appearance among them, and than the words which he from the Father, not the Father ſo immediately himſelf, ſpake to them? For that which is given to confirm a thing, is (in order of nature, and for evidence ſake) more certain and clear than that which it is given to confirm.

Fifthly, Conſider whether the voice of God's Spirit and light within in the heart be not more clear and certain to him that hears it, than any word or teſtimony from without? Is it not a ſurer word of prophecy than this relation or teſtimony of the apoſtles, of what they heard from the excellent glory? Yea, is it not ſurer than any teſtimony of the ſcriptures, or than all outward teſtimonies put together?

Sixthly, Conſider whether they who are turned from darkneſs to the light, even to the inward manifeſtation of God's Holy Spirit, ought not to give diligent heed unto it, until the day dawn, and the day-ſtar ariſe in their hearts?

Laſtly, Conſider, what is the difference between this light ſhining (as a word of prophecy) in the dark place, and the day dawning, and the day-ſtar ariſing in the heart? Is it not the ſame light, only further revealed and ſhining in its glory, in the holy and pure place?

The apoſtle Paul excellently openeth the thing, *Coloſſ.* i. 25, 26, 27. Firſt, he ſpeaketh of the Word in general, which he was to fulfil, or fully to preach. Then he ſheweth how this Word is a myſtery, hid in the Gentiles (for ſo the *Greek*, *ver.* 27. is) even in them that believe not; the Word is nigh there, the inſtruction and commandment of life nigh there. But

in thoſe that receive the grace, and believe in the light, and ſo become children of the light, and walk in the light, as God is in the light: in them Chriſt is riſen, and they are riſen together with him, and he is in them the hope of glory. So that the day hath dawned there; the day-ſtar hath riſen, and they know not only a meaſure of Grace from Chriſt, but Chriſt himſelf ariſen, dwelling, living, acting, walking in them, and they in him.

Let theſe things be duly conſidered of, and equally weighed in the holy balance, and then I dare appeal to every ſerious and ſober heart and mind, whether the inward light, the inward Word, the Word nigh in the mouth and heart, and the holy living teſtimony thereof, the voice of the witneſs within, of the prophecy within, be not ſurer to that man that hath it, and hears and knows the voice of it, than any outward voice or teſtimony whatſoever?

Object. *But ſome may object thus, or after this manner: I am ſatisfied that there is a Word nigh in the mouth and heart (to which Moſes did direct the Jews, and the apoſtles the Chriſtians), and that this Word doth enlighten the mind, and doth ſeparate in the mouth between words and words, and is a ſwift witneſs againſt the bad words, and a juſtifier of the good words; which come from the truth and uprightneſs of the heart, and are ſeaſoned with grace: I alſo believe that this Word is quick and powerful in the heart; ſeparating and dividing between the thoughts and intents there; and that the teſtimony thereof is ſurer and clearer (as to the hearts in which it ſhines, and to them whoſe ſpiritual ears are opened to hear its voice) than any words and teſtimonies from without. And I am ſatisfied alſo, that they who are the ſheep of Chriſt, do thus hear the ſhepherd's voice, and do know both the voice behind them; when it comes after them to reprove their wanderings, and direct their minds into the true way; and alſo the voice before them, when the Shepherd (who is the leader)* putteth forth his ſheep, and goeth before them, and they follow him; for they know his voice, *John* x. 4. *Yea, I have had the experience hereof in my own heart: for I have felt that work within, and that living ſweet teſtimony of God's Spirit in my own heart; which hath been more to me than all that ever I heard or read from without; ſo that I can truly ſay (with the Samaritans,* John iv. 22.) *Now I believe, not becauſe of the teſtimonies or words I have heard from without, but from the evidence and demonſtration of life, and of God's holy Spirit in my own heart. Nor can I ſee how the apoſtle Peter, in this place, can prefer the teſtimonies of the prophets (for that which is called the New Teſtament was not yet written and added to the old) before this glorious immediate teſtimony from God Almighty, which Chriſt was honoured with, and they were greatly honoured in being admitted to be beholders and witneſſes of. Yet ſomewhat ſticks with me; namely, thoſe words of the apoſtle,* ver. 20, 21. *wherein he plainly ſeems to me to ſpeak of the ſcriptures or writings of the prophets, as if they had been the more ſure word of prophecy, which in this place he had directed to. For why ſhould he ſay thus,* Knowing this firſt, *&c. unleſs he had intended the ſame Word*

Word of prophecy which he had been ſpeaking of before, and directing their minds how they might make uſe of that Word of prophecy?

Anſw. Peter was the miniſter of the circumciſion, and he was to deal with people who were great admirers and ſtudiers of the letter; therefore, though he, as well as Paul and John, and the other apoſtles (*Rom.* x. and *Acts* xxvi. 18. and 1 *John* i.) was to direct men to the Word within, and light within; yet he knew it was of great concernment to them rightly to read and be able to underſtand the letter without. Therefore, having firſt directed them to the Word of prophecy, to the path of the juſt, which is the inward ſhining light, to the light which ſhines more and more in the dark place to them that give heed to it; in the next place it was very proper, uſeful, and neceſſary to direct them how to read the ſcriptures aright. For indeed the oracles of God were given to them, *Rom.* iii. 2. and they ought to be diligent in the reading of them, that they might underſtand the holy prophecies and precious promiſes, *&c.* and reap the hope and comfort of them, and be made partakers of the divine nature, which is the thing promiſed. And not only to the Jews, but to the Chriſtians gathered from among the Gentiles in that age, were the ſcriptures greatly uſeful: and ſo they are alſo to ſuch as are gathered by the Holy Spirit and power of God in this age. The prophecies, the judgments, the promiſes, the mercies, the experience, *&c.* are all uſeful, and profitable to thoſe that read and underſtand them in the light of God's Holy Spirit. But the firſt thing needful is, to turn a man's mind to the light, that he may have ſomewhat to guide him, ſomewhat to ſtay his mind upon in reading the ſcriptures, ſomewhat to open and unſeal the holy and divine words and myſteries to him. For no man can truly and rightly underſtand the ſcriptures, but as his mind is opened by the Lord, and the underſtanding of words and things given him. So that this is exceeding neceſſary to be known (after a man is turned to the light and Word of prophecy within, and comes to read the outward oracles and teſtimonies of the Holy Spirit) that all the holy men ſpake not in their own wills, nor in the will of the fleſh, nor in the will of man, but as the Spirit of God gave them words, and moved them to ſpeak. And thoſe words ſpoken by God's Spirit knoweth none, but that Spirit which ſpake them. So that no man ought to venture by his private ſpirit to undertake to open and interpret thoſe words; but he muſt firſt receive the ſame Word of life, the ſame Spirit of prophecy within, and wait upon him, and learn to know his voice, who openeth what and when he pleaſeth to the ſons of men. And ſo when the ſame Word of life ſpeaks in a man's heart now, ſhewing things to come, either concerning a man's ſelf or others, that man muſt be careful to retire, and lie very low before the Lord, waiting upon him for the true underſtanding and right interpreting of his own words, elſe a man may eaſily miſunderſtand and miſapply what was truly and rightly ſpoken. So that this is the right way of underſtanding the words of prophecy from the holy men of God in former ages, and the inſtructions of the

the Word of life in the heart. *The ſecrets of the Lord are with them that fear him.* In the true fear the ear is opened, and the right underſtanding given; but in the wiſdom of the fleſh, and in the confidence thereof, it is eaſy erring at any time from the true ſenſe and right uſe of that which was opened and given by God, either for the ſoul's own good, or for the good of others.

To conclude this appeal: there is one conſideration on my heart to propoſe to the ſerious and ſober-minded; and oh! that they might rightly conſider and underſtand it! David was a man after God's own heart, a wiſe man, an inwardly-exerciſed man, an experienced man, an holy, ſpiritual, heavenly man; a man who knew the inward everlaſting kingdom, and had the Spirit of God, and witneſſed his truth in the inward parts: can ye think that David did not know the Word and commandment of life within? Did not God write his law in his heart? How elſe could he become a man after God's own heart? Did not he witneſs the everlaſting covenant, and the law thereof, the new law, the living law, even the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus? Now when David ſaid, *the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the ſoul*, what law did he mean? What is the law which converts the ſoul to God? Can any thing leſs than an inward power, an inward light, an inward law, an inward life, than the inward drawings and teachings of God's Spirit, convert the ſoul to God? And what teſtimony is that which makes wiſe the ſimple? Is it not the inward teſtimony? What made him wiſer than the antients, and his teachers, who knew and could teach the law outward? Were they not the inward teachings and inward precepts of God's Holy Spirit from the Word of life within, which doubtleſs was very nigh him, he being a man ſo exerciſed by God's Spirit, and ſo formed after his heart? And what are thoſe right ſtatutes which rejoice the heart, and the pure commandment which enlightens the eyes, and the clean fear and righteous judgments? Are not all theſe things known within, and received within? Doth not God put his fear within, in the heart? Doth not God reveal his righteous judgments within againſt ſin and iniquity? Oh! how did David cry out becauſe of God's dreadful judgments upon him for ſin, and ſaid his ſore ran in the night, and he watered his couch with his tears! And in another place, *My fleſh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments.* And when he ſpeaketh ſo much (as in *Pſal.* cxix.) of God's word, God's law, his teſtimonies, precepts, ſtatutes, judgments, &c. what doth he ſpeak of? Doth he ſpeak of the outward or inward miniſtration of the Word in the heart? Doth he not ſpeak of the inward writing, of the law in the heart, of the commandment in the heart, of the teſtimony of life there? For he had the teſtimony within, the Spirit within, the law within, the light within, the inward and ſpiritual kingdom (wherein the holy dominion of God is revealed) he knew within; and ſo believing, could ſpeak of the power and glory thereof, and of God's wonderous works, *Pſal.* cxlv. And when he ſaid, *thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path,* what

what Word did he mean? Did he mean the letter or law outward, or the Word nigh in the mouth and heart, which Moſes had teſtified of, and directed the Jews to, and he himſelf had been very well acquainted with? When again he ſaith, *Wherewithal ſhall a young man cleanſe his way?* And immediately giveth the anſwer, *By taking heed according to thy Word.* Doth he mean the letter without, or the Word within? What is it that cleanſeth the heart, that cleanſeth the way? Is it any thing leſs than the water of life, than the blood of the everlaſting covenant, than the Word and life of truth within? *Sanctify them by thy truth; thy Word is truth.* In the ſenſe of that inwardly, and obedience to it, is the renewing and ſanctification felt. And ſo this brings to be undefiled in the way, and to keep the teſtimonies of life, and preſerves from doing iniquity. *Bleſſed are the undefiled in the way,* ſaith he, *who walk in the law of the Lord. Bleſſed are they that keep his teſtimonies, that ſeek him with the whole heart. They alſo do no iniquity,* &c. Had he no experience of theſe things himſelf? Yea, ſurely. He knew the holy heart, the pure heart, the new and heavenly image, the heart after God's own heart; and he knew what it was to walk in innocency, and to be kept out of ſin. Hear what he himſelf ſaith, *Pſal.* xviii. 21, *&c. For I have kept the ways of the Lord, and have not wickedly departed from my God. For all his judgments were before me, and I did not put away his ſtatutes from me. I was alſo upright before him, and I kept myſelf from mine iniquity.* What was that? Was not that it which had moſt power over him, and was moſt apt to entangle and enſnare him? Now he that arrives here, he that doth this, that keeps himſelf from his iniquity, doubtleſs witneſſeth great power and victory over leſſer and ſmaller ſins. Was not David ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might? Did not the Word of God abide in him? Did not he overcome the wicked-one by the power thereof? How elſe could he walk thus in the ways of the Lord, as he expreſſeth, and keep himſelf from his iniquity?

Now this Word of life, theſe living teſtimonies and precepts, yea, the everlaſting ordinances and ſtatutes of the new covenant, with the ſure mercies of David, which Word Moſes had teſtified of, and directed to, and David had experienced (it being the pearl he had treaſured up and hid in his heart) and which was the Word of faith which Paul and the other apoſtles preached and teſtified of, turning men from darkneſs to this inward light; I ſay, this Word, this living Word (and the inward miniſtration thereof) God hath revealed and made manifeſt in this our day, and hath turned the minds of many to it, and is daily inviting men to Shiloh's ſtreams, to the living waters, to the light and habitation of the living. Bleſſed are they that hear the joyful ſound, and come to the holy mount and city of our God, where life lives and reigns, and is fed on by all the living; who are God's elect, God's heritage, God's vineyard of red wine, God's incloſed garden, whom he watcheth over night and day, and watereth every moment; and in whom he dwelleth and walketh, and is to them a God and Father, and maketh

maketh them daily ſenſible that they are his ſervants, children, and ſpouſe, in whom is his great delight, and on whoſe hearts and foreheads is written *Holineſs to the Lord.* Yea, and the Lord will bleſs thee for ever, *O habitation of juſtice, and mountain of holineſs!* and every tongue that riſeth up in judgment againſt thee will the Lord God condemn for evermore. This is the heritage of the ſervants of the Lord, whom the Lord hath gathered by the arm of his mighty power (inwardly revealed and ſtretched forth in them, and for them), *and their righteouſneſs is of me,* ſaith the Lord.

POSTSCRIPT.

There is a Scripture now openeth in me, as it hath often done, and it hath been very ſweet to my taſte; but I have not had freedom to give it forth to others, as at this time it is with me to do: it is that ſcripture *Rom.* ix. 18. *Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.*

NOW many apprehend from this ſcripture, as I alſo formerly did, that God hath choſen out a certain number of perſons on whom he will have mercy, and ſave by Jeſus Chriſt the Lord; and that he hath paſſed over the reſt, ſo that they were never intended to have any benefit by Chriſt's death as to their eternal ſalvation. This the wiſdom of man, from the letter of the ſcripture and many other places, may eaſily apprehend and ſtrongly reaſon for. But as the Lord openeth the mind, and men come to a ſenſe of his nature and Spirit, and his intent in ſending his Son, and receive the key which openeth the truth as it is in Jeſus, they will eaſily ſee that this is contrary to God's nature, and his intent in ſending his Son, and the univerſal covenant of light and life, and the manifeſt teſtimony of the ſcriptures.

Firſt, As touching the nature of God. His nature is *love*; love to all his creatures. He would not have it go ill with any of them. He needeth not their miſery to make himſelf happy. His nature is to love, to bleſs, to ſave; not to deſtroy or cut off, nor to afflict or grieve the children of men; not to hurt either the body or ſoul of any: he preſerveth man and beaſt, *Pſal.* xxxvi. 6.

Secondly, As touching his ſending his Son. He ſent him in his love to mankind, to ſave mankind. His love was not to a few only; but he loved all his creatures, he loved all loſt ſouls, and he ſent his Son to ſave them all. He gave him light to enlighten them all, and he gave him life to quicken them all; only he diſpenſeth this in different ways, according to the infinite wiſdom and good pleaſure of his Father.

So

So that, Thirdly, The covenant of light and life is univerſal, and nigh all mankind, by which the darkeſt parts and corners of the earth are at ſome times enlightened, and feel ſomewhat of the quickening life. For the life is the light of men, and the light comes from the life, and is a quick, piercing, quickening light, conveying warmth and life, yea, living virtue into the darkeſt hearts, as it moves and finds entertainment in them.

Laſtly, As for the teſtimony of the Scriptures, it is very clear that God would have none to periſh. *All ſouls are mine*, ſaith the Lord, *Ezek.* xviii. 4. *I have no pleaſure in the death of him that dieth*, ver. 32. And again, *As I live, ſaith the Lord God, I have no pleaſure in the death of the wicked*, chap. xxxiii. 11. I have ſent my light to enlighten all men, and turn all men, and I would have all men receive it, and be turned by it. I have ſhewed every man what is good, and what I the Lord require of him; and I would have every man anſwer the manifeſtation of my light and Spirit in him. Do ye not read God's charge againſt the whole earth, *Iſai.* xxiv. 5. that they had tranſgreſſed the law, changed the ordinance, broken the everlaſting covenant? Why then they all had the law, had the ordinance, had the everlaſting covenant; and for this cauſe it is that the curſe and judgment comes upon them, *ver.* 6. So that this was the condemnation from the beginning, and this is the condemnation ſtill, *that light is come into the world, and men love darkneſs rather than light, becauſe their deeds are evil.* Men are not condemned for want of light from Chriſt Jeſus; but becauſe they do not believe in, and obey that light which they have from him; becauſe they believe in the darkneſs, believe in the dark ſpirit, believe in the dark power, which riſeth up againſt the miniſtration of light in the heart, and do not believe in that which is given of God to diſcover and work it out. What ſhould I multiply ſcriptures for? That common ſcripture is abſolutely undeniable (as the Lord opens the heart unto the ſimplicity of truth, and keeps it out of the ſubtil enchanting wiſdom) *John* iii. 16, 17. *For God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life. For God ſent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world, through him, might be ſaved.* What can be more naked and plain than theſe words of Chriſt, who knew the very heart of God in this particular, and plainly declares what it is, even not to condemn, not to deſtroy, but to ſave men from condemnation and deſtruction? And would Chriſt have ſo affectionately wept over *Jeruſalem*, had he known it to be his Father's will and determinate counſel that they ſhould have periſhed, and not have been gathered and ſaved by him? I ſhall add but one place more, where the apoſtle (who knew God's counſel, and underſtood the myſtery of election and reprobation, and had the mind of Chriſt) ſaith expreſly, that *God will have all men to be ſaved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth*, 1 Tim. ii. 4. What words can be ſpoken more plain and full? And let people mind that theſe words are far plainer and eaſier to be underſtood than thoſe ſcriptures which treat of election and repro-

reprobation; which is a deep myſtery; and men muſt come to a growth in the truth, before they can receive that capacity which is neceſſary towards the underſtanding of them. But to open the thing a little, as it is now in my heart.

There hath been a three-fold diſpenſation of God to mankind. A diſpenſation of the law to the Jews; a diſpenſation of the goſpel (or promiſe, which was as well before the law as after it) to the called Jews and Gentiles; and a ſecret hidden diſpenſation of the myſtery of grace, of the myſtery of life and ſalvation, which the apoſtle calls the myſtery hid in the Gentiles, *Coloſſ.* i. 27. For ſomewhat of God, ſomewhat of the nature and Spirit of Chriſt, the ſouls of all mankind have had near them, to enlighten them, and to turn them from Satan's power to God; though it hath not been a thing known to them, but a myſtery hid in them.

Now that God did caſt off any Jew under the law, or any whom he viſits with the grace and power of the goſpel, from a mere abſolute will in himſelf, becauſe he would deſtroy them and have them periſh, to ſhew forth the praiſe of his juſtice, and his abſolute ſovereignty, this the true ſenſe of life in me denies; but all have a viſit of that which ſaves heartily and in true good-will from God; and he that is turned to that which God hath ſent to turn him, ſhall be owned and ſaved thereby. He that believeth in the truth, in the light, in the Word nigh, even in the very loweſt appearance of it (for the loweſt appearance is the ſame thing in nature with the higheſt, and the grace is ſaving in its very loweſt appearance, as well as in its higheſt) ſhall be ſaved thereby.

Now mark: God's grace, God's mercy, God's love, God's light, God's Spirit, God's power, *&c.* is his own, and he may do with his own what he pleaſeth. Now it being by this that he ſtrives, converts, and ſaves; and it being in his own will and good pleaſure how long he will ſtrive and contend to ſave; it lieth therefore abſolutely in him, even in his own will, what he will do in this kind. He may take advantage againſt rebellious man, and cut him off when he will; and again, he may ſtrive and raiſe true ſenſe in a man's heart, and give repentance, and pardon his tranſgreſſions, as long as he pleaſeth; yea, he may ſo change a man's heart, and ſo create him a-new in Chriſt Jeſus, and ſo bring him into unity with the pure ſeed, and to that eſtate in the ſeed, as that he may have aſſurance he ſhall never be utterly caſt off; but that though he ſhould ſin, and tranſgreſs the holy law of God's Spirit, his iniquity ſhall be chaſtiſed with ſtripes, and his ſoul recovered and brought back thereby, but not utterly rejected by the Lord. Now it being thus, hath not God mercy on whom he will? And doth not he harden as he pleaſeth? Did not God give up the Jews to hardneſs, after much ſtriving with them? Did not God give up the Gentiles to hardneſs, and to vain imaginations concerning the true God, after they had rejected a meaſure of the true knowledge? *Rom.* i. 21. Have not the veſſels of wrath, who are fitted to deſtruction, a day of much long-ſuffering firſt? *Rom.* ix. 22. Had not the

the old world, who were fitted for that deſtruction of the flood, a long day of patience and forbearance from God, his Spirit reproving of them, and ſtriving with them? To what end did God forbear them, and cauſe his Spirit to ſtrive with them? Was it not to lead them to repentance, that thereby they might have avoided that deſtruction, which, by their rebellion and ſtiffneſs of ſpirit againſt God's good and tender Spirit, they were fitted for, and expoſed to? See *Rom.* ii. 4. So for Cain, how tenderly did God deal with him! how uprightly did God ſeek his good! Would not God have had him come to a true ſenſe and repentance? Would not God have had him believed and offered in the faith, and been accepted as his brother was? And for Pharaoh, God indeed was againſt that nature and ſpirit in him which oppreſſed Iſrael; but would not the Lord have had him denied and turned from that nature and ſpirit, and let Iſrael go? God would have no man do evil, and bring upon themſelves deſtruction; though in his juſt judgment he is many times provoked to give men up to that which leadeth into and hardeneth in evil. So not only Pharaoh, but Iſrael alſo, was given up to their own hearts luſts, when they would none of the Lord, nor hearken to his counſel, *Pſal.* lxxxi. 12. But ſaith the Lord, oh! that it had been otherwiſe! *Oh! that my people had hearkened unto me!* &c. it ſhould then have been otherwiſe with them, *ver.* 13, *&c.*

So that God of himſelf doth not deſire the deſtruction of his creature; nor doth he deſire to harden them, or to give them up to a deluding Spirit, that they might be damned; but men firſt refuſe the truth, and turn from it, or let it go; not receiving it in the love of it, or not liking to retain the knowledge of it (which is death to the man's corrupt nature, ſpirit, will, and wiſdom, and ſuch a croſs and yoke as he is in no-wiſe willing to bear); and then the Lord, in his juſt judgment, gives them up to the deceitfulneſs of ſin, to be hardened by it. Now this lieth in God's own breaſt when and to whom to do it, according to his own will, and according to his own wiſdom and counſel; ſo that it may be truly and properly ſaid, *he hath mercy and compaſſion on whom he will, and whom he will he hardeneth.* But that God hath determined to harden any, without giving them a day of mercy; or that it is God's will and determinate counſel that men ſhould reject the day of his mercy and precious invitation, that they might be hardened by him and periſh; this is not God's truth, but men's miſapprehenſions upon true words, gathering meanings therefrom in their own wiſdom, and not waiting upon God till he cauſe the true light to ſhine in them, and thereby give them the true knowledge and underſtanding.

Therefore, ſince there is ſuch mercy in God towards all, and he hath given all men a day of viſitation, greater or leſſer; yea, ſince of late he hath cauſed his light to ſhine forth, and given this age ſuch a viſitation as many ages have not had, oh! let men take heed how they cloſe their eyes, ſtop their ears, and harden their hearts againſt it, leſt they provoke God to give them up to their own imaginary, conceited, fleſhly comprehenſive

knowledge of the letter, and ſo ſeal them up in that hardneſs of heart and deafneſs of ſpirit which they firſt gave themſelves up to. For the letter, without the Spirit, killeth; and ſo doth all literal knowledge: and there needs no greater curſe from God (it will ſufficiently avenge the cauſe of his reproached light, and holy covenant of life in Chriſt Jeſus, now abundantly revealed and made manifeſt) than to cloſe mens eyes, and ſtop their ears, and harden their hearts (in their literal knowledges and practices) from beholding and partaking of the precious life and virtue of the holy and living miniſtration in Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, wherewith God viſiteth and redeemeth his people.

Indeed the phyſician is come inwardly and ſpiritually, and he inwardly heals and reſtoreth his people, faithfully ſeeking after the ſick, the diſtreſſed, the broken, the wounded; pouring oil into their wounds, and healing them. But there are ſome who are ſo ſound and whole in their notional apprehenſions and practices, that they have no need of the phyſician, and them the phyſician paſſeth by, as unworthy of him, and whom he intendeth ſhall have no ſhare with him. *Ephraim is joined to idols* (he is well, he hath enough, he hath no need of me) *let him alone*, ſaith the Lord. I will pour out the choice virtue of my ſpiritual life and redeeming power among my gathered ſheep and lambs, who have need thereof, and will rejoice therein. Theſe will know my voice; theſe will juſtify the appearance of my Spirit and power; theſe love the ſavour of my anointing and precious ointment, which runs down from the head upon all the living body, and theſe ſhall have it. Theſe underſtand how I have mercy on whom I will, and whom I will I harden; and it is my will to have mercy on theſe my once-greatly-diſtreſſed-ones, and to deſtroy (inwardly to deſtroy, oh! who knows what that means!) the fat and the ſtrong, and to feed them with judgment. Oh! that men did know to whom the mercy and to whom the judgment belongs! To the wiſdom of the fleſh, to the wiſe comprehenders of the things of God after the fleſh, is the judgment: to the poor, to the diſtreſſed, to the broken in ſpirit (not to them that are at eaſe in their literal knowledge, but to the mourners in Sion after the holy God, and his living power and righteouſneſs) is the everlaſting goſpel, the mercy, the love, the peace, the binding-up, the redemption which is by Chriſt Jeſus, the living miniſter in the holy ſanctuary of our God.

NAKED TRUTH:

OR,

TRUTH nakedly manifesting itself,

In SEVERAL PARTICULARS,

For the Removing of Hindrances out of the Way of the SIMPLE-HEARTED,

THAT THEY MAY

Come to true Knowledge, Life, Liberty, Peace, and Joy in the LORD, through the Virtue and Power of his precious Truth revealed and working in them.

Given forth by Way of

QUESTION and ANSWER.

Whereunto are added,

Some EXPERIENCES, with some SCRIPTURES, very sweet, and necessary to be experienced in the Gospel-State.

AS ALSO,

A few Words concerning the TRUE CHRIST;

AND

A few Words in the Bowels of tender Love and Good-will to my NATIVE COUNTRY.

By a long Mourner and Traveller after, but at length an happy Experiencer of, the Truth, as it is in JESUS,

ISAAC PENINGTON.

Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see. LUKE X. 23.

THE

PREFACE.

TRUE knowledge and true experience, eſpecially cencerning things of neceſſity, and great concern to the ſoul, is very precious. As; to know the true foundation, the corner-ſtone, which God lays in his ſpiritual Sion; and the heavenly Jeruſalem, which is the mother of all that are born of God; and the gathering out of the ſpirit of this world (with the vanity and falſhood thereof) into God's Spirit, which is truth and no lye; and the building up of the holy temple, in which God appears, and is worſhipped; and the heavenly communion with the Father and Son, in the one pure light which ſhines from them into the heart; and the one faith, the one circumciſion, the one baptiſm, the one holy mountain, the one feaſt of fat things made thereon; the one water of life, the one bread, the one cup of ſalvation, *&c.*

Now the things of the kingdom are all at the diſpoſal of the king thereof. To him all power is given, in him are hid all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge; he hath life in himſelf, and he hath life to diſpoſe of, and diſpenſe to his. He gives the true knowledge, which is life eternal; he gives repentance, and remiſſion of ſins. He teacheth to believe in the Father, and he giveth faith alſo. He is the Shepherd of the ſheep, who by his voice quickeneth, and maketh alive, and leadeth, and preſerveth, and nouriſheth up to life eternal. Therefore, whoever will underſtand aright, muſt receive underſtanding from him; and whoever will repent aright, muſt receive repentance from him; and whoever will believe aright, muſt receive faith from him; and whoever will hear and ſee aright, muſt receive an ear and eye from him; and whoever will come unto him, and receive him, muſt witneſs that new heart forming or formed in him, wherewith and whereby he is received. Men greatly miſtake and err about the goſpel knowledge and religion, by beginning therein without the goſpel-ſpirit and power.

There-

Therefore that man that would not be deceived, and loſe his ſoul for ever, let him take heed how he begins, how he ſtands, and how he proceeds in his religion. The Jews ſtood in the revelation of God's Spirit and power outwardly; and the ſtate of the Chriſtians, the new-covenant ſtate, ſtands in the revelation of God's Spirit and power inwardly: for none can beget a new-birth to God inwardly, but his own Spirit and power working inwardly in the heart.

Therefore, thou that wouldſt live with God for ever, and not periſh from the preſence and glory of his power, mind theſe three things:

Firſt, God's inward viſiting thee, and making a real change in thee. I do not mean a change in thy mind from one notion to another; but a change in thy heart from one nature and ſpirit to another. This is the great work, which nothing but the mighty power of God, which raiſed Jeſus from the dead, can effect in the hearts of the children of men. Now that this may be wrought out in thee, wait for the appearing and working of that power, which (by its appearing and working) doth effect it daily more and more in thoſe that unite to it, and give up to its operations. Oh! wait to feel the power begetting ſomewhat of its own nature in thee, leavening thee into its nature by the pure heavenly leaven wherewith God waits to leaven thy heart! Thus feel thy beginning from the true root, from the holy principle, from the ſeed of the kingdom; and then wait to feel that grow up in thee, and to grow up therefrom, that as the beginning is pure, ſo the growth may be pure alſo. For after God hath viſited thee, and begotten ſomewhat in thee, and leavened thee in ſome meaſure, ſo that there is true life, true ſenſe, true hungerings, true breathings after the Lord and his righteouſneſs, after the fountain of living waters, then (in the next place) mind and wait to learn of the true teacher how to come to the true waters, that thou mayeſt drink thereof, and of no dirty puddle, of thy own or any other's forming. Where are theſe waters diſpenſed, and where are they to be found? Why in the new covenant, which God makes with the hungry and thirſty ſouls, as they come to the Shepherd, and hear his voice, and learn of him, and follow him. Therefore thou muſt wait to diſtinguiſh ſpirits, and the knocks of ſpirits in thy own heart. Thou muſt know when the Shepherd knocks, and when the ſtranger knocks; and let in the Shepherd when he knocks, and not let in the ſtranger when he knocks. Thus, by knowing him, inclining thine ear to him, and hearing his voice, thou comeſt to have the everlaſting covenant made with thy ſoul, even the ſure mercies of David, wherein the union with God is ſure, the teacher ſure, never more to be removed from thee; the fear which God puts into the heart ſure; the law of the new life ſure, being ſo written in thy heart by the finger of God's Spirit as none can blot out; the love of God ſure, his preſervation ſure, the inheritance of life ſure. O ſweet covenant! O holy covenant! O bleſſed covenant! and bleſſed are all thoſe ſouls with whom

whom God makes this covenant, and who are kept by him in the ſenſe and enjoyment of it!

Now, laſtly, after God hath made this covenant with thee, and ſpoken peace to thee, and given thee of the power, righteouſneſs, and joy of the kingdom, and ſet the holy hedge of his power and wall of ſalvation about thee, thou muſt take heed of going forth after any luſt, after any deſire of the fleſh, after any temptation of the enemy; thou muſt keep within the holy limits, and not touch any dead or unclean thing, leſt thou be defiled, and ſo in degree ſeparated from him who is pure.

The occaſion of what follows was briefly thus:

There was a controverſy between me and another about many of theſe things, towards whom my love was in a travail; and having a ſenſe on my heart that the enemy makes uſe of the wrong apprehenſions and miſtakes he begets in mens minds about theſe things, contrary to the true knowledge and experience which God giveth to the children which are born of the heavenly womb, who indeed alone can rightly plead for and juſtify their mother, in this day of great ſtrife and contention about the kingdom, and the right heir thereof; I ſay, having this ſenſe on my heart, and theſe things naturally ſpringing up and opening in me upon this occaſion, I was drawn in love, and in the motion of life, thus to give them forth to others, hopeing that the Lord may thereby open the minds of ſome towards, and confirm the minds of others in, the ſenſe and belief of the truth, and the inward manifeſtation of his Spirit, which diſcovers and ſtrives againſt the darkneſs, luſts, and corruptions in them. The Lord give people the ſenſe of the ſtrivings and reproofs of his Holy Spirit inwardly in their hearts, and join their ſpirits thereto, that they may receive light, life, virtue, and ſtrength from his Holy Spirit, and thereby witneſs the overcoming and keeping under the enemy of their ſouls, that they may know what it is to have the ſeed of the woman bruiſe the ſerpent's head in their own particulars, that ſo the holy child Jeſus may be exalted (his horn exalted in them) and he may reign, and exerciſe his government in them, and they may become kings and prieſts to God, and reign in him over all that his power is ordained to break and keep under, yea, utterly conſume and deſtroy, in the hearts of thoſe that ſubmit themſelves willingly to him, and walk in the light and leadings of his Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

NAKED

NAKED TRUTH.

Given forth by Way of

QUESTION and ANSWER.

I. *Concerning underſtanding the Holy Scriptures truly and aright.*

Queſt. *WHETHER the ſcriptures can be underſtood aright, without the light of God's Holy Spirit ſhining inwardly in the heart, and giving the true underſtanding of them?*

Anſw. No; not poſſibly. For as the outward eye cannot poſſibly ſee without the ſhining of ſome outward light, no more can the inward eye ſee without the ſhining of the inward light. God, who commanded light to ſhine out of darkneſs, cauſeth the light of his Spirit to ſhine in the hearts of people according to his holy pleaſure, and thereby they come to ſee. God ſeeth all things in his own light, in the light of his pure eternal Spirit; and in his light do the children of light ſee light. The things of God's kingdom are holy myſteries, and the words which he ſpeaks concerning thoſe holy myſteries none can underſtand, but as he pleaſeth to open and reveal them. He hath given us an underſtanding to know him that is true, 1 *John* v. 20. *The inſpiration of the Almighty giveth underſtanding*, (Job xxxii. 8.) without which, man is dead, and can neither hear, nor ſee, nor underſtand any of the things of God's kingdom.

II. *Concerning the illuminating Spirit, and ſanctifying Spirit.*

Queſt. *Whether the illuminating and ſanctifying Spirit be one and the ſame Spirit or no? becauſe it is affirmed by ſome (and written by one to me as a ſound diſtinction of divines, which diſtinction he ſaith he hath a mind I ſhould learn) that there is a Spirit of ſanctification, and that is peculiar to the godly; and*

there is a Spirit illuminating, and that is oft vouchſafed to the wicked, as it was to Balaam.

Anſw. The Spirit which illuminateth, and the Spirit which ſanctifieth, is one and the ſame Spirit; and the illumination of the Spirit is in order unto ſanctification. The ſame light which diſcovereth the darkneſs, alſo chaſeth away the darkneſs, as it is received and ſubjected to, and purifieth the mind; for the light hath not only a property of enlightening, but alſo of cleanſing and ſanctifying. And the reaſon why men are not changed, juſtified, and ſanctified, in and by the light, is becauſe they love it not, and bring not their hearts and deeds to it; and ſo it is their reprover and condemner, and not their juſtifier and ſanctifier. But the ſame Spirit, light, and life which enlighteneth, alſo ſanctifieth, and there is not another.

III. *Concerning the Holy Spirit of God, and the Holy Scriptures*

Queſt. *Whether they be always joined; or ſome may have the Spirit, who have not the ſcriptures; and ſome may have the ſcriptures who have not the Spirit?*

Anſw. The Holy Spirit of God, and the holy ſcriptures, are not always joined together; for ſome in the dark corners of the earth may be viſited by the Spirit, become ſenſible of the Spirit, and receive the Spirit, who never heard of the ſcriptures; and many may have the ſcriptures, and yet be very ignorant of, and ſtrangers to, God's Holy Spirit; as the Jews were, who had them read in their ſynagogues every ſabbath-day, and yet Chriſt told them, *Ye neither know the ſcriptures, nor the power of God.*

IV. *Concerning the Law of the Lord, which is perfect, and which converts the Soul.*

Queſt. *What is the law of the Lord, which is perfect, and converts the ſoul? Is it the outward law or writing in the letter, or the inward law and writing in the Spirit?*

Anſw. No man is, or ever was, or ever can be, converted to God from the inward law of ſin and death, but by the inward law of life and righteouſneſs written in the heart; and I am ſure that law is perfect, the new covenant is perfect, and the law thereof perfect; the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus perfect, which converts the mind to Chriſt, the righteouſneſs of God, and ſets it free from the law of ſin and death. And David was a ſpiritual man, and knew the inward covenant, and the inward creating of the heart anew, and God's holy and free Spirit, and the law and teſtimony thereof. I will grant a great deal to the letter and miniſtration outward; but I muſt attribute more to the inward; or elſe God's light, and the holy experience which he hath given me, will condemn me. And as the Jew outward had the law, and teſtimony, and ſtatutes outward; ſo I am ſure the

the true Jew, the Jew inward, hath the law, and teſtimony, and ſtatutes inward, written in his heart by the finger of God's Spirit; yea, and the ſame Spirit put within him, to cauſe him to keep this law, and the holy teſtimony, ſtatutes, and judgments of the Lord; and the ſpiritual Jacob, and Iſrael of God, in this the day of their redemption and ſalvation from on high, do follow the Lamb whitherſoever he goes, and walk in the light of the Lord,

V. *Concerning* David's *Longings, expreſſed in* Pſal. xlii. xliii. cxix. *and other Places.*

Queſt. *Were David's longings more after the law outward, or after the law and light of God's Spirit inward?*

Anſw. David was a man after God's own heart; a man that knew an inward and clean heart of God's creating, and knew the free Spirit of the Lord, and the freſh ſpringing life thereof, and the leadings of the pure living truth inwardly in his heart, and this was it he moſt eſpecially prized and longed after. *Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right ſpirit within me, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me,* &c. ſaith he (*Pſal.* li. 10, 11.) after his fall, ſhewing what he had been acquainted with before, and what he now (God having touched his ſpirit afreſh) began to long after again. And ſaith he, in another place, *Oh! ſend out thy light and thy truth; let them lead me, let them bring me unto thy hill, and to thy tabernacles,* Pſal. xliii. 3. Oh! the ſweetneſs of light within, truth within! Oh! the precious leadings and drawings thereof, which were once felt, upon a freſh and tender remembrance thereof, cannot but be longed after again!

VI. *Concerning the Sun, or Fountain of ſpiritual Light.*

Queſt. *Whether the holy ſcriptures, or written teſtimonies, be the ſun or fountain, and the light within but a ray or ſtream from them? (as is affirmed by my antagoniſt).*

Anſw. It is juſt quite contrary: for the holy men ſpake the holy words from the inward light and quickening life of God's Spirit within them; ſo that that was the fountain in them, and is ſo ſtill. *With thee is the fountain of life; and he that believeth, as the ſcriptures have ſaid, out of his belly ſhall flow rivers of living water. This ſpake he of the Spirit* (John vii. 39.) that is the fountain. *The water that I ſhall give him, ſhall be in him a well of water ſpringing up into everlaſting life,* John iv. 14. Who eſteems and honours the ſcriptures aright? He that believes their teſtimony, comes to Chriſt, and makes his Spirit, light, and life all; or he that ſets the ſcriptures in the ſtead of that Word of life which they came from, teſtify of, and point men to, as the fountain and foundation of life and ſalvation to all mankind?

VII. *Concerning the Word's being a Fire and a Hammer, to burn up the Chaff, and break the Rocks in Pieces.*

Queſt. *Is the Word, which is a fire and hammer, the teſtimonies and declarations of the holy ſcriptures without, or the Word nigh in the mouth and heart?*

Anſw. That which I have felt hammering inwardly, that which I have felt burning inwardly (unquenchably, as the mind has been kept to it) has been the Word of life itſelf, from which the good words and holy teſtimonies proceed. That which does the work in the inward Jew, is the inward miniſtration of the inward covenant, the appearance of God there: he is the conſuming fire; he is the Spirit of judgment and burning, who, by his holy flamings inwardly, burns up the filth of the daughter of Sion. A man may be exerciſed in the letter all his days, and yet witneſs nothing of this inwardly in truth and righteouſneſs; but he whom the Spirit of judgment and burning inwardly comes nigh, and whoſe fleſh is kept in that holy furnace, it will be conſumed there day by day, until it be quite waſted and deſtroyed, and ſo he come to be judged according to the fleſh, and to live to God in the Spirit.

VIII. *Concerning God's writing his Law in the Heart.*

Queſt. *How doth God write his law in the heart?*

Anſw. By his Spirit and power working there, whereby he both creates a new heart, and writes the new law, even the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus, in the new heart. *The iſles ſhall wait for his law.* Whoſe law? The law of the Meſſiah, the law of grace, which gives dominion; the law of the anointing, the law of the new-birth, the law of the holy ſeed. *His ſeed remaineth in him,* 1 John iii. 9. In that ſeed is the new nature, and the new law both. What is the law of ſin? What is the law of death? How is it written in the heart? How doth the enemy write it there, but by his corrupt ſpirit and nature? And doth not God, by his holy Spirit and nature, write the new law, the law of life, in the hearts of thoſe that are renewed and made tender to the impreſſions of his holy quickening power? Every motion and drawing whereof is a law to them who are born of the Spirit, and taught of God to eye and walk after the quickening Spirit.

IX. *Concerning the inward Light of God's Spirit.*

Queſt. *What is it which the mind is to be turned to, to enlighten it, and to work the darkneſs and corruption out of it?*

Anſw. It is no leſs than the light of God's Spirit; nothing elſe can do it. The day-ſpring muſt ariſe from on high in the heart, or there will be night for ever there. All notions or apprehenſions concerning the light will not do it;

it; it is the ſhining of the light alone inwardly which is able to expel the darkneſs there. It was not for nothing that Chriſt came a light to enlighten men, and directed men to follow him the light, that they might not abide in darkneſs, and that he ſent his apoſtles with this meſſage, that *God is light, and in him is no darkneſs at all*; and ſo gave his apoſtles wiſdom, authority, and power to turn men from the darkneſs to the light. And if the darkneſs was within, which they were to be turned from, ſurely the light muſt ſhine within, to diſcover the darkneſs, and to that light muſt they be turned. And in this light the Holy Spirit is received, and dwells there; but out of this light, and the limits thereof, in every heart, dwells the unclean and dark ſpirit, and hath power and rule there; for nothing but the light and ſtrength of God's Spirit is able to break his kingdom and dominion inwardly in the heart.

X. *Concerning the Miniſters and Miniſtry of the Goſpel.*

Queſt. *Who are the miniſters, and what is the miniſtry of the goſpel?*

Anſw. They are the miniſters of the goſpel who have received the Spirit and power wherein the miniſtry of the goſpel ſtands. For Chriſt came in the Spirit and power of the Father, and he ſends his apoſtles and miniſters in the ſame Spirit and power, that they might be able to beget, and reach to that birth which is to be begotten and miniſtered to. It is one thing to be a miniſter of the law, and to miniſter letter; and another thing to be a miniſter of the goſpel, and to miniſter Spirit. The apoſtles were able miniſters of the New Teſtament; not of the letter, but of the Spirit; and ſo are all in a degree, who ſucceed them in any meaſure or proportion of their miniſtry. For the miniſtry of the goſpel is in the light, Spirit, and power of the Moſt High, to turn peoples minds to a proportion of the ſame light, Spirit, and power in themſelves, and ſo to come to the manifeſtation and quickening of the ſame life in themſelves, that ſo they may walk in the ſame light. For the life is the light; and he can never have light, or ſee light, who comes not firſt to feel ſome virtue from the quickening power. Oh! how precious is this miniſtry! Bleſſed be the Lord for his renewing of it in theſe our days! And this miniſtry is not to be confined to an outward order of men, as the miniſtry of the law was; but whoever hath received the gift, ſo he is to miniſter, as the Lord guides, leads, and orders him in the uſe of that gift which he hath beſtowed upon him for that end. And what if he be an herdſman, a fiſherman, a tent-maker, or the like? Yet if God hath poured out his Spirit upon him, and openeth his mouth, he hath not only liberty, but more, even authority, from the Lord God Almighty to ſpeak in his name, either for turning men unto Chriſt, the light and life of men, or for building men up in their holy faith in him, whoſe Spirit and power was and is the reſurrection in the life for evermore.

XI. *Concerning trying of Spirits, and ſearching the Heart.*

Queſt. *What is it which ſearcheth the heart, and infallibly tries ſpirits?*

Anſw. God's Spirit, God's word nigh in the heart and mouth, ſeparateth and giveth true diſcerning and judgment there, to all whoſe ears are circumciſed and inclined to it. God's Spirit is the ſpirit of judgment; and where he is given, the Spirit of judgment is given, and he judgeth in his children by the quickening life and ſenſe he beſtoweth on them, which diſtinguiſheth between life and death, between truth and deceit; yea, between the ſame words, when they come from the dead ſpirit, and when they are ſpoken in his living power: Chriſt gives his Spirit to his ſheep, which gives them to know his voice, to know when life ſpeaks, and when words are living, and food for the living; and in what mouth they are dead, and cannot yield living nouriſhment.

XII. *Concerning things neceſſary to Salvation.*

Queſt. *Whether all things neceſſary to ſalvation be contained in the ſcriptures?*

Anſw. The ſcriptures give teſtimony concerning the one thing neceſſary to ſalvation; but the thing itſelf, Chriſt himſelf, the ſeed itſelf, is not contained in the ſcriptures, but revealed in the ſhinings of the true light, and ſo received or rejected inwardly in the heart. *Behold I ſtand at the door and knock.* Bleſſed are they that hear his voice, and believe him knocking, and open to him, and receive him, who gives eternal life and power to become ſons of God to as many as receive him, and believe in, and give up to, the inward revealings of his redeeming arm and power therein. *To whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* To them in whom, and to whom, this arm is revealed, Chriſt is revealed; and they in whom, and to whom, Chriſt is revealed, know the one thing neceſſary, even him who is life eternal, in whom all other neceſſary things are wrapped up, and by whom they are conveyed to the ſoul, according to its need, by him who is faithful in all his houſe, and takes care of every ſheep which the Father committeth to him.

XIII. *Concerning the true Goſpel-Church, or Society.*

Queſt. *What is the true goſpel-church, or ſociety?*

Anſw. A company of true believers in the Spirit and power of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. A company of true Jews, inward Jews, Jews in Spirit, of the true circumciſion, whom the Father hath ſought out, and made true inward worſhippers; ſuch as are gathered to the name, and gathered together in the name of the Lord Jeſus, to offer up ſpiritual ſacrifices to God through him. A company of living ſtones, who have received life from him, the foundation-

foundation-ſtone; and meet together to wait upon, and worſhip the Father, in the light and Spirit which they have received from him. This is the holy church, or living aſſembly of the New Teſtament; bleſſed are they that are of it! For about this church is the wall of ſalvation; and they that are added by God's Spirit and power to this church, and abide in it, ſhall certainly be ſaved.

XIV. *Concerning the Way to Salvation.*

Queſt. *Which is the certain and infallible way to ſalvation?*

Anſw. It is a new and living way; it is ſuch a way as none but the living can walk in. It is an holy way, which none but the cleanſed, the ranſomed, the redeemed of the Lord, can ſet one ſtep in. The way, the life, and the truth are all one; bleſſed are they that find it, and walk in it! In plain and expreſs terms, it is the Lord Jeſus, the light of the Lord Jeſus, the life of the Lord Jeſus, the Spirit of the Lord Jeſus, the truth as it is in him, his wiſdom, his power, he himſelf, the covenant or holy limit between God and the ſoul. He that comes into him, comes into the way; he that abides in him, abides in the way; he that walks in him, walks in the way. He that comes to his light, his life, his Spirit, his truth in the inward parts, comes to him; he that abides therein, abides in him; he that walks therein, walks in him: and he that walks out of the light and leadings of his Spirit, let him walk in what form he will, yet he walks not in him the way.

XV. *Concerning Chriſt's ſaving the Soul.*

Queſt. *How doth Chriſt ſave the ſoul?*

Anſw. By viſiting inwardly, knocking inwardly, appearing inwardly, cauſing the light of life to ſhine inwardly, and ſo enlightening and quickening inwardly, breaking the ſtrength of the enemy inwardly, and bringing out of the region and ſhadow of darkneſs inwardly, into the region and path of light. By the light and power of his Spirit he begets a child of light; which child of light he brings out of Egypt, the dark land; out of Sodom, the filthy unclean land; out of Babylon, the land and city of confuſion (where the Spirit of the living God, and the holy order of life, and his precious government in the heart, is not ſo much as known), and brings him into the light, where he and his Father dwells. And this child of light is not of the nature of darkneſs, but light in the Lord, and walks in the light, as he is in the light; and by the further ſhining and working of the light and life in him, he preſerves and ſaves him daily more and more.

XVI. *Concerning Regeneration, or the New-Birth.*

Queſt. *What is regeneration, or the new-birth?*

Anſw. It is an inward change, by the Spirit and power of the living God, into his own nature. It is a being begotten of his Spirit, born of his Spirit; begotten into, and born of the very nature of his Spirit. (*That which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit*, John iii.) It is not every change of mind which is the right change; but only that which God, by the very ſame power wherewith he raiſed our Lord Jeſus Chriſt from the grave, makes in the hearts of thoſe whom he viſits; who are ſenſible of, receive, and are ſubject to his inward life, light, and power.

XVII. *Concerning true Holineſs.*

Queſt. *What is true holineſs?*

Anſw. That holy nature, and thoſe holy actions, which ariſe from the holy root; all elſe are but imitations of holineſs, not the true holineſs. The tree muſt be made good firſt, and then the fruit will be good alſo. There are many likeneſſes of the true holineſs up and down in ſeveral profeſſions; but there is no real holineſs to be found, nor righteouſneſs neither, but in the trees of God's planting, in the branches which are by him ingrafted into the true vine and olive-tree, whoſe ſtrength of virtue and holineſs lies in the ſap, which they daily receive from him.

XVIII. *Concerning Chriſt's Works outwardly in the Days of his Fleſh, and inwardly in the Day and inward Shining of the Light of his Spirit in the Heart.*

Queſt. *Which are greater, the works which Chriſt did outwardly on the bodies of men in the days of his fleſh, or which he doth inwardly in mens minds and ſpirits by the powerful appearance and operation of his Spirit? Becauſe Chriſt ſaid, the works that he did, thoſe that believed on him ſhould do, and greater alſo, becauſe he went to the Father*, John xiv. 12.

Anſw. Doubtleſs to reach to the ſoul, and quicken the ſoul, and raiſe the ſoul out of the grave of death, and cure the blindneſs, deafneſs, hardneſs, and diſeaſes of the ſoul, is greater than the outward, and was ſignified by the outward.

XIX. *Concerning the Yoke, or Croſs of Chriſt.*

Queſt. *What is the yoke or croſs of Chriſt?*

Anſw. It is inward, as that which is to be crucified is chiefly inward. It is that gift of God, that light of his Spirit, which is contrary to the darkneſs,

neſs, contrary to all that is corrupt; which wills and wars againſt it; and being received, ſubjected to, and borne patiently, takes away the life of the fleſh, the will and wiſdom of the fleſh, and all the ſubtil reaſonings and devices of the fleſhly part; and ſo that languiſhes and dies, and God's plant is eaſed of it; and the ſoul abiding under this croſs, comes into the true, pure, and perfect liberty, where it hath ſcope unto holineſs, freedom unto righteouſneſs, and is in ſtrait bonds and holy chains from all liberty to the fleſh, and from all unholineſs and unrighteouſneſs of every kind.

XX. *Concerning making our Calling and Election ſure.*

Queſt. *How may a man make his calling and election ſure?*

Anſw. By making the gift of God ſure to him; by making that ſure to him wherein his calling and election is. For the choice is of the ſeed, the holy ſeed, the inward ſeed, the ſeed of God's Spirit, and of the creature as joined to the ſeed, God would have none to periſh; but would have all come to the knowledge of Chriſt the truth, who is the ſeed, in whom the election ſtands: and his holy advice to men is, whom he begins to call and to lead towards the election, *to make their calling and election ſure.* So that the way of making the calling and election ſure is, to make the gift ſure, the ſeed ſure, the leaven ſure, the pearl ſure, which God will never reject, nor any that are found in true union with it, and in the love and obedience of it. Oh! therefore, as God viſits with power (with his powerful gift) and as thou receiveſt power, dominion, and authority over ſin (for in this gift is God's dominion and authority revealed) be faithful to the gift, be faithful to the power, give up to the truth in the inward parts, come into it, dwell in it, that thou mayſt feel its virtue and delivering nature from every enſlaving and embondaging thing, and then ſtand faſt in the liberty wherewith Chriſt the Lord (by the life, virtue, and power of his truth) ſets thee free. And ſo here thou wilt read thy calling, and read thy election day by day; and find them ſealed, and ſure to thee, in that truth, in that gift, in that heavenly light, in that holy ſeed, which came from God, and is of him, and which he delights to own, and will never reject.

XXI. *Concerning Prayer.*

Queſt. *What is the true prayer?*

Anſw. The breathings which ariſe from the true birth, from the living ſenſe which God gives to the true birth; theſe are the true prayer. There is a Spirit of prayer and ſupplication given by God to his children to wreſtle and prevail with him by. All prayer that ariſes from, and is given by, that Spirit, is true prayer; all other prayer is not right and true, but at beſt but an imitation of the true. *We know not what to pray for as we ought; but the Spirit maketh interceſſion for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.*

Mark; the very groanings that come from God's Spirit, from his breathing and work upon the heart, are right prayers in God's ſight; but other ſighs and groans are not ſo.

XXII. *Concerning Repentance.*

Queſt. *Which is the true repentance?*

Anſw. That which Chriſt gives, whom God hath exalted to be the prince and Saviour, to give repentance and forgiveneſs of ſins, *Acts* v. 31. It is not in man's power to repent; his heart is hard and impenitent. It is God's power which melteth, tendereth, and changeth the heart. So that there is a great difference between the ſenſe and ſorrow of man's nature, and the ſenſe and ſorrow which God gives to the heart which he renews and changes. The one is of an earthly, the other of a heavenly, nature. The one is like the early dew, or morning cloud, it ſoon paſſeth away; the other is written in the new heart, and abideth. So that in it there is a real ſorrow and mourning over the corrupt nature, and all the dead works of the fleſh, and a turning from them, and meddling no more with them. This is the repentance of the renewed-ones, which is the gift of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt unto them, and is a godly ſorrow for ſin not to be repented of.

XXIII. *Concerning Faith.*

Queſt. *What is the true faith?*

Anſw. It is a belief in the power which ſaves, from a true ſenſe and experience of it in the heart. For the power which ſaves muſt firſt manifeſt itſelf, before it can be believed in; and how doth it manifeſt itſelf, but by ſhining in the heart, which hath been darkened by tranſgreſſion, to open the eye of the underſtanding, which the god of the world hath blinded, and to unſtop the deaf ear, and ſo it begets and creates ſomewhat capable to receive its further manifeſtation. The ſcripture ſpeaks of a new creation in Chriſt. Indeed all true believers are ſo: and they have the ability, the faculty, the power of believing from him who creates them anew. There is that which is called faith in unregenerate men; but that is not the faith I am now ſpeaking of, but that which is the gift of God to his own birth, to his own begotten. *To you it is given not only to believe*, &c. Phil. i. 29. Mark: *it is given to believe.* Oh! this holy gift! this faith of the new-birth is the faith which pleaſeth God, prevaileth with him, purifieth the heart to which it is given, giveth acceſs to God, intereſt in his power and promiſes, and victory over the worldly nature, and over all the ſoul's enemies. Bleſſed be the Lord for beſtowing and increaſing it in the hearts of his children.

XXIV. *Concerning Obedience.*

Queſt. *What is obedience?*

Anſwer. The obedience which flows from the true underſtanding of God's will, and from the holy nature which he begets in the heart. It is the obedience which flows from true ſenſe, true underſtanding, and true faith. There is no birth can believe aright but one; nor is there any birth can obey aright, but that birth which believes aright. The true believing is from the quickening virtue of God's Spirit (all other faith is but dead faith); and the true obedience is in the newneſs of the Spirit, *Rom.* vi. 4. and vii. 6. Man may ſtrive to underſtand and obey all his days; but he can do neither, but as he is quickened, taught, and enabled of the Lord. *Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy ſtatutes,* Pſal. cxix. 33. There is a myſtical path of life. The way of wiſdom, the way of holineſs, the holy ſkill of obeying the truth, is hid from all living, from all mankind, but ſuch as are begotten and brought up by him in the holy ſkill and myſtery of ſubjection to the Lord. *Thy people ſhall be a willing people in the day of thy power.* It is the power of God that works the will in the heart, and the ſame power works to do alſo; and none can learn either to will or to do aright, but as they come to be acquainted with that power, joined to that power, and feel that power working in them. And here, in this power, to this new-birth, faith and the holy obedience are as natural, as unbelief and diſobedience are to the birth of the fleſh. It is frequently and abundantly experienced by his holy birth, by the child of his begetting. Bleſſed be the name of the Lord.

XXV. *Concerning Juſtification.*

Queſt. *What is juſtification, or how is a man juſtified in the ſight of God?*

Anſw. By a true ſenſe of, and faith in, that which juſtifies; which is the Spirit, the life, the water, the blood, the virtue, the power of the Lord Jeſus. All theſe are one in nature, and they go together. Man is ſinful naturally, fallen from God, found a tranſgreſſor againſt him. Now he needs juſtification from his ſins, and he needs juſtification in reſpect of what God hath intruſted him with, and requires of him; and in the new-birth, and joining to the Spirit of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, he meets with both. Being quickened by his Holy Spirit, turned from the darkneſs, coming into the light, and walking in the light; there his ſins are done away, blotted out, as if they had never been, for his name's ſake; and there he receiveth a new ability, a new heart, a new Spirit, yea, the Spirit of the living God, to quicken him, and work in him; and whatever he doth in this Spirit (or rather what God doth by him, in and through this Spirit) is juſtified, owned, and accepted. God finds no fault in any of the fruits of

his own Spirit (in any of the children of men), but only in the fruits of the fleſh. And if, for want of watchfulneſs, the enemy ſhould prevail, and draw into a ſnare; yet upon turning to the light of God's Holy Spirit, which diſcovers and reproves for it, in the holy light the water flows, the blood is ſprinkled, the conſcience is cleanſed, and ſo becomes clean even in God's ſight. Oh! bleſſed is he who is not deceived with dead notions of juſtification, but feels the juſtification which comes from God, and is accompanied with a living ſenſe, and with the teſtimony of his Holy Spirit.

XXVI. *Concerning good Works.*

Queſt. *What are good works?*

Anſw. The works that flow from God's good Spirit, the works that are wrought in God, they are good works. The works of the new-birth, of the new creature, are good works; whereas all the works of the fleſh are bad, though never ſo finely painted. All its thoughts, imaginations, reaſonings, willings, runnings, hunting to find out God and heavenly things, with all its ſacrifices, are corrupt and evil, having of the bad leaven, of the bad nature in them. Make the tree good, or its fruit can never be good; ſo that they are only the good works that flow from the good tree, from the good root. And here all the works of the fleſh, though never ſo glorious and taking in man's eye, are ſhut out by God's meaſure, by God's line and plummet of righteouſneſs and true judgment; and every work of God's Spirit, the meaneſt work of faith, the leaſt labour of true love, the leaſt ſhining of life in the heart, and the giving up thereto, is owned by God as coming from him, and wrought in him, who worketh both to will and to do, of his own good pleaſure. He that is gathered to the light which God hath enlightened him with, hath received the light, dwelleth in the light, and walketh in the light; the Spirit of the living God is near him, and dwelleth with him, and worketh in him; and he bringeth his deeds to the light, where it is manifeſt that they are wrought in God. But he that is out of the inward light of God's Holy Spirit, his works are not wrought in God, and ſo can but make a fair ſhew in the fleſh (to the fleſhly eye) but are not good in God's ſight. The erring man's way and works are often right in his own eyes; ah! but bleſſed is he whoſe way and works are good and right in the eye of the Lord, in the judgment of his ſearching unerring light and Spirit.

XXVII. *Concerning Love.*

Queſt. *Which is the true love?*

Anſw. The love which ariſeth from the nature which God begets, and from his circumciſing the heart from the other nature. Love is the beautiful thing. What can be higher expreſſed concerning God himſelf, than

to

to ſay he is love? Love is greatly commended and admired, and there are many pretenders to it; but none have the true love, but only thoſe that are born of God, and circumciſed by him. *The Lord thy God will circumciſe thine heart, and the heart of thy ſeed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy ſoul, that thou mayeſt live*, Deut. xxx. 6. Mark: the true love ariſeth from the true circumciſion; and the more a man comes to have his heart circumciſed from the fleſhly nature, and to grow up in the pure and heavenly nature, the more he loves. God is love; and the nigher any one comes to him, and the more he partakes of him, the more he becomes love in the Lord, and the more he is taught of God to love the Lord his God, and his brethren in the Spirit, and all mankind who are of his blood (for of one blood God made all mankind) according to the fleſh, or according to a natural conſideration.

XXVIII. *Concerning Meekneſs and Patience.*

Queſt. *What is the true meekneſs and patience?*

Anſw. The meekneſs and patience which ariſeth from the Lamb's nature. Deceit will put on an appearance of love, and deceit will put on alſo an appearance of meekneſs and patience; but it cannot put on the true love, the true meekneſs and patience: that is only learned of the Lamb, and received of him by receiving of his Spirit and nature from him. And oh! how precious is this! how ſweet is it felt in the heart! To feel a meek, a quiet, a patient ſpirit in the midſt of all trials, all troubles, all fears, all doubts, all temptations of every kind. Indeed this is of much price in the ſight of the Lord, and alſo in the eye of him who hath received it from the Lord, and enjoyeth it in him, and poſſeſſeth his ſoul in him.

XXIX. *Concerning the Knowledge of the new Covenant.*

Queſt. *What is the knowledge of the new covenant?*

Anſw. The knowledge which is given by God to the new-birth: for to it the new covenant belongs, and the knowledge thereof. The truly begotten of God, the true diſciples of Chriſt, to them it is given to know the kingdom of God; but to others it is not given. The Jew outward, the firſt birth, the birth after the fleſh, for them the prieſt's lips were to preſerve knowledge, and they were to ſeek the law at his mouth; and to them God ſent prophets to ſpeak to them, and taught them by his prophets: but concerning the inward Jews, the children of the new covenant, the children of the Jeruſalem which is above, concerning her ſeed it was propheſied, that they all ſhould be taught of the Lord; they all ſhould hear and know the voice of the ſhepherd himſelf; they ſhould all be gathered to the ſhepherd and biſhop of the ſoul, and taught by him. So that in this

this new, holy, living covenant, God himſelf is the ſhepherd, God himſelf is the teacher, not only of the greateſt, but of the very leaſt, *Heb.* viii. For he teacheth them all to know the Lord, and to know his Son, and to come to his Son, and to love him their Father, and one another. So that he that is taught of God, he hath the true knowledge, the living knowledge, the ſubſtantial knowledge, the knowledge of the thing itſelf, of the life eternal itſelf. All that are not thus taught (but learn only from a literal deſcription and relations of things) have not the knowledge of the new covenant, the knowledge of the thing itſelf; but only an outward knowledge, ſuch as the firſt birth may catch at, lay hold on, and comprehend.

XXX. *Concerning the Fear of the New Covenant.*

Queſt. *What is the fear of the new covenant?*

Anſw. It is the fear which God puts in the hearts of his children; which fear cleanſeth their hearts, and keepeth them from departing from their God. There is a great deal of difference between the fear which may be learned from precepts from without, and the fear which God puts in the hearts of his children from a root of life within; which fear is of an heavenly nature, and is the free gift of God to his own heavenly birth, and none elſe; which no man can poſſibly attain by any thoughts or reaſonings of his own, but only by the ſpringings of life from God. And he that would have this fear, muſt know the place of wiſdom, and wait there for it; and when he hath it, this fear will ſoon begin to make him wiſe towards ſalvation, and teach him to depart from evil, which is the cauſe of deſtruction, *Job* xxviii. 28.

XXXI. *Concerning Hope.*

Queſt. *What is the true Hope?*

Anſw. The ſtay of the mind upon the Lord, the ſtay of the heavenly birth upon its father: for we muſt diſtinguiſh between hope and hope. There is the hope of the hypocrite, or falſe birth, which ſhall periſh; and the hope of the true birth, which will never fail it, nor make it aſhamed; becauſe that birth is taught of God to hope aright. Now in hope, there is both the ground of it, and the hope itſelf. The ground of the hope is God's love, God's truth, God's faithfulneſs, God's grace, his ſeed, his Chriſt felt within; being of him, united to him, in him, he in me: here is the ground of my aſſurance of the everlaſting glory and inheritance, which is ſure to the ſeed, and to all that are of and in the ſeed. So knowing Chriſt within me, feeling Chriſt within me, living in him, and he in me, I have an anchor ſure and ſtedfaſt within the veil, which no ſtorms, no tempeſts, no trials, no temptations, preſent or to come, have power over me. And then there is the hope, or hoping itſelf; that is, the ſtaying of the mind upon

upon the Lord, the leaning upon the Lord, the retiring beyond all thoughts, or reaſonings, or lookings out, to the inward life; to feel ſomewhat ſpring from it, for the ſoul to hope or truſt in, beyond all outward appearance. And this hope never deceives nor makes aſhamed thoſe who are taught of God thus to ſtay their minds upon him. Nay, though the ſtate be darkneſs, and no light ſeen; yet beneath the darkneſs there is ſomewhat to ſtay the mind of the child and ſervant of the Lord till he appear, and cauſe light to break out of obſcurity; for light is ſown for the righteous, and joy for the upright, even in their darkeſt, ſaddeſt, and moſt diſtreſſed conditions; in all which the Lord is near them, and there is ſtill ground for them to hope in him.

XXXII. *Concerning Peace.*

Queſt. *Which is the true peace?*

Anſw. The peace which God ſpeaks to the ſoul; the peace which Chriſt gives to his own diſciples. The way of truth, the way of life leads to peace; and the peace which is found therein is of God's giving, and is the true peace. Firſt, God breathes upon the heart, begets a right birth, a true child; then he leads him into the holy way, the righteous way; from that which loads and burdens, to that wherein is the eaſe and reſt. Thus in the believing and following him there is joy and peace. This is experienced by all the true travellers, and by none elſe. No man, with all his wiſdom, knowledge, and underſtanding, can ſo much as gueſs at what this peace is. The peace of God, the peace which he ſpeaks to his children, the nature of it, the ſweetneſs of it, the heavenlineſs of it, paſſeth man's underſtanding; but he who is born from above, who hath a new and heavenly underſtanding, he knoweth the nature, excellency, and preciouſneſs of it; and would not for all this world, for any fear, or danger, or expectation of any thing from without, hazard the breaking off this precious peace and reſt of his ſoul in his God.

XXXIII. *Concerning Joy.*

Queſt. *Which is the true joy?*

Anſw. The joy which flows from God's preſence, and the work of his power in the heart, and the aſſured expectation which he gives of the full inheritance and glory of life everlaſting. When the bridegroom is preſent, when the ſoul is gathered home to him, married to him, in union with him, in the holy living fellowſhip; when he appears againſt the enemies of the ſoul, riſing up againſt them, breaking, ſcattering them, and giving of his good things, filling with life, filling with love, filling with virtue, feaſting the ſoul in the preſence of the Father; oh! what ſweet joy! oh! what fullneſs of joy is there then in the heart! *In thy preſence is fullneſs of joy.*

joy, and at thy right-hand are pleaſures for evermore, ſaid the pſalmiſt, *Pſ.* xvi. 11. Surely he had had a taſte of the thing, he had been in God's preſence, and that made him cry out, *Caſt me not away from thy preſence*, Pſal. li. 11.; and he had drank of the river of God's pleaſure, which is at his right-hand, which made him ſpeak ſo ſenſibly of it, *Pſal.* xxxvi. 8. and xlvi. 4. Chriſt ſaid to his diſciples, that becauſe of his going away they ſhould have ſorrow; but he would ſee them again, and their heart ſhould rejoice, and their joy no man ſhould take from them, *John* xvi. 22. How or when was this fulfilled? What were they ſorry for? Was it not the loſs of his outward preſence, which had been ſo ſweet and comfortable to them? How would he come to them again? Was it not by the Comforter? Was it not by his inward and ſpiritual preſence? So that he that was with them ſhould be in them? Before they knew Chriſt with them; now they ſhould know Chriſt in them; the Father in them, and they in him; Immanuel, the goſpel ſtate, God with us, dwelling with us, tabernacling in us, living in us, walking in us, and we living and walking in him. When the apoſtles came to this ſtate, then they came to witneſs the joy in the Holy Ghoſt, even the joy unſpeakable, and full of glory. And hence it is that the goſpel ſtate is a ſtate of joy and rejoicing in the Lord, even in his glorious living preſence, and in the glory of his power. For in the goſpel ſtate the true light ſhines inwardly in the heart, the life is manifeſted; and being manifeſted, they that come into the manifeſtation of it, come into the holy union, and into the holy fellowſhip with the Father and Son, where the joy is, and where the joy is full; where the power is revealed which does away that which is contrary to the holy fellowſhip, and hinders the holy joy and rejoicing in the Lord. See 1 *John* i. 3, 4.

XXXIV. *Concerning Poverty of Spirit and Humility.*

Queſt. *Which is the right poverty of ſpirit, and the true humility?*

Anſw. That poverty and humility of ſpirit which ſpringeth from the ſame root from which the faith, the love, the peace, the joy, and the other heavenly things ariſe; and is of the ſame nature. There is a voluntary humility, and a voluntary poverty, even of ſpirit, which man caſts himſelf into, and forms in himſelf, by his own workings and reaſonings. This is not the true, but the falſe image, or counterfeit of the true; but then there is a poverty which ariſeth from God's emptying the creature, from God's ſtripping the creature; and an humility which ariſeth from a new heart and nature. This of the right kind, and is laſting, and abides in the midſt of the riches and glory of the kingdom. For as Chriſt was poor in ſpirit before his Father, and lowly in heart in the midſt of all the fullneſs which he received from him; ſo it is with thoſe who are of the ſame birth and nature with Chriſt. They are filled with humility, and cloathed with humility, in the midſt of all the graces and heavenly riches which God fills

fills them and adorns them with. Keep in the faith, keep in the truth, keep in the light, keep in the power; it excludes boaſting in or after the fleſh, and keeps the mind in that humility and poverty of ſpirit which God hath brought, and daily further and further brings it into; and ſo the humility and poverty remains (poor in ſpirit for ever, humble in ſpirit for ever, nothing before the Lord for ever) even as that remains which brought into that frame, and keeps in that frame for ever. And ſo the Lord of life is only exalted, and the creature kept abaſed before him, and low for ever; and is nothing but as the Lord pleaſeth to fill, and make it to be what it is. So what I am, I am by God's love, by his grace, by his mercy, by his goodneſs, by his power, by his wiſdom, by his righteouſneſs, by his holineſs, which he of his own good pleaſure communicateth, and cauſeth to ſpring in me, and filleth and cloatheth me with, as ſeemeth good in his ſight.

The CONCLUSION.

THERE is mention made in the book of the *Revelations*, in the epiſtles from Chriſt to the ſeven churches of Aſia, of a tree of life, which is in the midſt of the paradiſe of God (the fruit whereof is good for food, and the leaves thereof for the healing of the nations); and of hidden manna, and a white ſtone, and in the ſtone a new name written, which none knoweth but he that receiveth it; and of a morning-ſtar to be given, and power over the nations, to rule their ſpirit, even as Chriſt hath received of his Father; and of being cloathed in white, and his name confeſſed before the Father, (This is the ſheep of my fold, the child of my Father's begetting, who is named by me among the living, I know him by his name, *John* x. 3.); as alſo of his being a pillar in the temple of God, and of going no more out, but bearing the name of God, and the name of the city of God, the new Jeruſalem (which cometh down from God out of heaven); and of Chriſt's new name (oh! what is that!) and of ſitting with Chriſt in his throne. This is the generation of ſpiritual kings, who have a ſpiritual kingdom, and a ſpiritual throne, even Chriſt's kingdom, and Chriſt's throne, the royal prieſthood of God. Oh! precious things! Oh! rich glory! Surely eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of men to conceive what theſe things are.

Now he that would witneſs theſe things; he that would know, experience, and enjoy theſe things, muſt mind that ſeed in which they are wrapped up, as in a ſeed, and out of which they ſpring, and ſhoot forth. The kingdom is in the ſeed, the throne in the ſeed, the power in the ſeed. He that is united to the ſeed, and abideth in the ſeed, receiveth power from the ſeed, and overcometh, he ſhall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he ſhall be my ſon, *Rev.* xxi. 7. But he that will be ſo, muſt not be fearful or unbelieving of overcoming ſin, or his ſoul's enemies; but muſt depend

upon the almighty, and all-ſufficient power of God, which will give him victory over ſin, and keep him that he touch no unclean thing; that he may be holy, as the Lord his God is holy; and righteous, even as the Lord his God is righteous. Indeed it becometh the heavenly children to partake of the divine life, of the heavenly nature of their Father, and be like him. And he that partaketh of his nature, of his holineſs, *Heb.* xii. 10. is holy, as he is holy: and he that from the holy root of purity and righteouſneſs, doth righteouſneſs; is righteous, even as he is righteous, 1 *John* iii. 7. So it is written without, and ſo it is teſtified within, by him that is born of God, in whom the ſeed remaineth, which overcometh the wicked one, bruiſeth him and keepeth him under: and the juſt live by the faith which giveth victory over him.

Some EXPERIENCES added.

I. *Concerning the Seed of the Kingdom.*

CONCERNING the ſeed of the kingdom, this I have experienced; that it conſiſts not in words or notions of the mind, but is an inward thing, an inward ſpiritual ſubſtance in the heart, as real inwardly in its kind, as other ſeeds are outwardly in their kind: and that being received by faith, and taking root in man (his heart, his earth, being ploughed up and prepared for it) it groweth up inwardly, and bringeth forth fruit inwardly, as truly and really as any outward ſeed doth outwardly. This ſeed is known by its contrariety and enmity againſt the ſeed of the ſerpent; againſt all the ſeeds of evil in the hearts of men; it diſcovering them, turning the mind from them, and warring againſt them, and bruiſing and overcoming them in all that receive it, and let in its holy nature; which, as an holy leaven or ſalt, worketh out that which is unholy and unrighteous, dark and dead, and ſeaſoneth with light, with life, with grace, with the holineſs and righteouſneſs of truth.

II. *Concerning the Soul's Food.*

The ſoul's food is that which nouriſheth it, which is the ſame with that which giveth it life. Every word proceeding out of the mouth of God, every motion, every quickening, every operation of his Spirit is living, and nouriſheth the ſoul with life, which receiveth it and feedeth on it. The ſpiritual Manna, the ſpiritual Water, from the Holy Well or Fountain, the Milk of the Word, the Fleſh and Blood of the Son of the living God, his words which are ſpirit and life, nouriſh up the living birth unto life everlaſting.

everlaſting. How comes man to live at firſt; but by hearing the voice of him that giveth life? And how comes man to live afterwards, and to increaſe in life, but by hearing the ſame voice ſtill? *Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your ſoul ſhall live*, &c. Iſa. lv. 3. This I have alſo experienced to give me life, to nouriſh up and ſtrengthen me in life; even freſh life communicated from the living Fountain; and ſo my life is not in myſelf, not in any thing I can comprehend concerning Chriſt; but in being joined to him, in being ingrafted into him the holy root, into him the true olive-tree, into his Spirit: and ſo by the ſap that ſprings up into me from him, my life is maintained and increaſed in me daily. Glory to his name for ever.

III. *Concerning God's Power.*

Concerning God's power, this I have experienced; that that is it which doth the work in the ſoul. It begets to God, it brings out of the land of darkneſs, it leads through all entanglements, and preſerves in the midſt of them all. It breaks down the old building of ſin and iniquity (both inwardly and outwardly, both in heart, and alſo in life and converſation) and raiſeth the new and holy building: It makes willing, it makes obedient, it gives to believe, it gives to ſuffer. Oh! bleſſed be the Lord for the day of his power, which is inwardly broken forth! Oh! what would the poor child do, (the poor Lambs in the midſt of the Wolves, inwardly and outwardly) were it not for the Father's hand, the Father's arm, the Father's power, which is ſtill with them, and compaſſeth them about! Oh! bleſſed are they that know the miniſtration of the life inwardly, the power of life inwardly! For in life, in the ſeed of life, is the holy power; which is manifeſt, appears and works, as it gains ground on the creature, to put forth and exerciſe in it the virtue and ſtrength which it daily receiveth from its Father.

IV. *Concerning Temptations.*

Concerning temptations, this I have experienced; that the ſtrength and hurt of them, as to the ſoul, lies in the ſoul's looking at them. For the ſtrength of God is revealed in his children againſt the tempter; which being patiently waited for, and truſted in, will never fail them. The leaſt babe, the Lord would not have let in temptation and ſin: but watch to that, and keep joined to that, which will preſerve out of temptation, and out of ſin. God is faithful, who hath care of all his, and whoſe promiſe is to all his: and as he would have none ſin; ſo none that diligently wait, ſhall want his power to ſtand by them, to preſerve out of ſin. *Look unto me, and be ſaved, all ye ends of the earth.* It is univerſally true. Look unto me, truſt in me; look not at yourſelves, truſt not in yourſelves; look not at the enemy, fear not the

enemy; I will ſave you from every ſnare, every temptation, as your eye is ſtedfaſt upon me. What if the enemy come in like a flood? If the Spirit of the Lord lift up a ſtandard againſt him, can he prevail? What though he caſt fiery darts? What though he beſet round about? Will not the ſhield of faith quench them all? Will not the whole armour of God defend and keep ſafe from them all? If the enemy be reſiſted lawfully, (that is, in true faith in that power which is engaged for the ſoul againſt him) doth not the power of the Lord ariſe and ſcatter him, and ſtrengthen and eſtabliſh the ſoul in the grace, and in the truth? Oh! the holy myſtery of the heavenly warfare, and of the working of the pure power againſt the enemy; which overcomes all his impurities, and keeps clean from them! Look not at the enemy; let not in the reaſonings of the mind; keep in the patience, keep in the pure fear, in the holy living ſenſe; be only what thou art in the ſeed, in the new birth, in the life which God hath begotten in thee; then art thou ſafe, then art thou in the name of the Lord, which is the ſtrong tower. The enemy indeed may make a noiſe about thee with his luſts, with his temptations, with his floods, with his ſtorms, with his fiery darts: but he cannot enter thy habitation. The ſpirit of darkneſs, the prince of darkneſs, is ſhut out of the land of the living. Abide thou there: dwell in the light, and walk in the light, as God is in the light, and he ſhall never have power over thee.

V. *Concerning Prayer.*

I have experienced prayer to be the breathing of that birth which God begets, to the Father of life which begat it; who by his Spirit makes known to it its condition and wants, and gives a ſuitable ſenſe of heart, and cries to it. For as it is not in man to beget himſelf to God; no more can he pray to God in his own will or time, but as God pours out the Spirit of prayer and ſupplication upon him, and by his Spirit teacheth and helpeth him to pray as he ought. *Becauſe ye are ſons, God hath ſent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father.* I have had a ſenſe of the natural man, and of the ſpiritual man; and of the cries and prayers of each: and this I have been taught and learned of God, that the goſpel-prayer is the prayer of that birth which is begotten by the Spirit and power of the goſpel; and which prays in the Spirit, and in the ſpringing of the holy life and power; whereby it rightly wreſtles, and prevails with God, obtaining the mercies and bleſſings which it wreſtles with him for. For to this child there is acceſs from God in the faith, through that holy Spirit of life which makes way for it, to obtain grace and mercy in the time of need. And through this Spirit it prays to God, and prevails with him on the behalf of others alſo. For the prayers of the righteous avail much, as it is written.

VI.

VI. *Concerning Juſtification and Sanctification, ſome things which it hath pleaſed the Lord, in his tender mercy, to give me to experience.*

Firſt, That it is the ſame Chriſt, the ſame Spirit, the ſame Life, the ſame Wiſdom, the ſame Power, the ſame Goodneſs, Love and Mercy, the ſame Water, the ſame Blood, which both juſtifies and ſanctifies.

Secondly, That juſtification and ſanctification go hand in hand together. There is none juſtified, but he that is in meaſure ſanctified: and there is none ſanctified, but he that is in ſome meaſure juſtified. For God juſtifieth by a rule (by the new covenant, and according to the law thereof); and men receive and partake of juſtification, according as they are brought into, and keep within, the compaſs of that rule. For God acted of old toward, and juſtified, the children of the old covenant according to the law thereof; and the children of the new covenant are juſtified, and partake of juſtification, according to the law thereof.

Thirdly, That juſtification and ſanctification are both of and through the grace. It is ſo in the beginning, and it is ſo all along. *By grace ye are ſaved*, ſaith the apoſtle. The whole work of ſalvation is begun and carried on through grace. It is through that, God viſits and reaches to the ſoul, with his quickening virtue and power. He regenerates alſo thereby. Through that he juſtifies; through that he ſanctifies, *&c.* So that as the work goes on, grace, grace, is to be cried to him that does the work, from his very laying the foundation and faſtening the ſoul thereupon, to his very laying on of the top ſtone.

Fourthly, Though juſtification and ſanctification be of God's grace and mercy in Chriſt; yet this doth not exclude faith: but they are alſo through faith, and not without it. God doth not juſtify man in the unbelieving ſtate, in the dead ſtate, in his abiding there; but in the coming out of it, in the repenting and turning from the dead works to the living God, and in believing in him: and ſo he alſo ſanctifies him.

Fifthly, Faith and obedience are of the ſame nature, and always go together. So that where-ever there is faith, there is obedience likewiſe; and where-ever there is obedience, there is faith. Obedience flows from faith, and cannot be without it; for the very nature and virtue of faith is in it. And faith is obedience. For this is the command of God, that the ſoul believe on him (and in his appearances) whom he hath ſent to ſave; and this believing is obedience unto him that commands it. And this faith, and this obedience, is holy and juſt in God's ſight; and through it (but not without it) the ſoul is both juſtified and ſanctified.

Sixthly, That the works of faith, the works of the new life, are not the works of the law, the works of the old covenant; nor are excluded juſtification, as the works of the old covenant are. For I have found the Lord, who hath condemned and excluded all my doings, which ever I have been able;

able to do of myſelf, ſtill juſtify and accept what his Spirit and holy power hath done in me. They are not of the ſame nature in themſelves; nor are they ſo accounted of in the eye of the Lord. For the Lord diſtinguiſheth between root and root: and what ſpringeth from the holy root, he juſtifieth as holy; and what ariſeth from the unholy root, he condemneth as unholy.

Seventhly, That by the law of faith all boaſting is excluded, in the whole work both of juſtification and ſanctification. What is the law of faith? Is not this its law, to fetch all from the Son, to do all in the Son? to quit ſelf, and its own ability, and to perform all in the newneſs of the Spirit, in the ability which is of God, given and continued, in and through his grace and mercy, to the ſoul in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; all the veins of life, all the ſtreams of the new covenant run here. Here is no boaſting of the creature; here can be no boaſting: for all its ability and ſtrength is ſhut out; and that which is given of God to it, is all and doth all. Yet every Jew here hath praiſe of God. His faith is commended, his love is commended, his faithfulneſs is commended, his zeal for the Lord, his obedience to the Lord, his patience in ſuffering, is commended, *&c.* But the praiſe and honour of all redounds not to his fleſh, but to the Spirit and grace of God in him. So that here fleſh is laid low, and kept in the duſt for ever, and God alone exalted in this day of his pure power in the heart. He that truly believeth, entereth into reſt. How into reſt? From what doth he reſt? Why, from his own works, from the works of the fleſh; yea, from the works of the old covenant; from the works that ariſe from his own ability, from the works wherein he can never be juſtified with the goſpel-juſtification. But doth he ceaſe from the works of faith? Doth he ceaſe from the labour of love? Doth he ceaſe from obedience to any thing that God requires? Nay: then ſurely he rather beginneth to work and labour in the vineyard; and his labour is not in vain in the Lord.

VII. *Concerning Faith.*

Several things I have experienced, both concerning the nature, virtue, and operations of it; ſome whereof (as I feel them ſpring up livingly in my heart) I may mention at this time.

Firſt, This I have often experienced; that it is an hard thing truly and rightly to believe. It is an eaſy matter to believe notions concerning God, and concerning Chriſt: but to believe in God, to believe in Chriſt, to believe in him that raiſed up Jeſus, to believe in the light, life, and power, which flows from Jeſus; this indeed is hard, by reaſon of the great darkneſs and ignorance which man is fallen into through tranſgreſſion.

Secondly, I have experienced this alſo; that faith is God's gift, and that it flows from the power of his life. There is firſt a quickening, firſt a touching of the heart, by the holy pure power of the Lord; and when a man

man is touched and quickened, then in and by and through that virtue which flows into him, he can believe in that which toucheth and quickeneth him.

Thirdly, That Faith never ſtands in a man's own power, but always in the virtue and power of the life of the Son. So that he that will believe aright, muſt wait to feel the life of the Son revealed in him, and faith flowing therefrom. For the true belief ſprings from the life of the holy root; and from the flowing up and ſpringing up of that life, faith receives its nouriſhment and daily virtue.

Fourthly, I have obſerved this in my travels; that the earthly wiſdom, and notions therefrom got into the mind, and held in the mind out of the ſenſe of life, are a great lett to faith. For theſe ſtrengthen and nouriſh that in man, which is to be weakened and die; that life, and the birth of life, may be all in the heart. Man is to die; man is to be ceaſed from; his underſtanding, his wiſdom, is to be brought to nought. But after it hath had a ſtroke and wound from God's Holy Spirit and power (even the very wound which tends to death) yet it will be getting life again (getting its deadly wound healed) and nouriſhing its life by thoſe very notions, which came from that life and power, which in meaſure ſlew it. And thus the Jew outward hath his life in the outwardneſs of knowledge, in the outwardneſs of the law, in the letter which killeth: for the relation and outward knowledge of things killeth and deadeneth more and more, unleſs man come into the inward life and virtue, and daily feel them quickened there. *If ye live in the Spirit, walk in the Spirit*, ſaid the apoſtle. A man cannot live in an outwardneſs of knowledge concerning the Spirit and power of the endleſs life; but he that would truly live, muſt live in the Spirit itſelf; and he that would rightly walk on in his way, muſt walk in that Spirit wherein he received life, and wherein he that abideth lives before the Lord.

Fifthly, This I have alſo obſerved; that all notional faith, wherein is not the living virtue (as concerning Chriſt, his ſufferings, death, reſurrection, aſcenſion, interceſſion; and concerning juſtification by him, *&c.*), the enemy will let the ſoul alone with, and let him enjoy peace in; but his war is deſperately againſt the true faith, againſt faith in the true power, againſt faith in the light of life. Oh! how many ſore and ſharp aſſaults doth he make againſt the faith which receives its virtue from God, and cauſeth the ſoul to live to God! And how ſore is it with the ſoul, when faith is weak, and the enemy comes on againſt it with the ſtrength of his aſſaults and temptations. *Lord increaſe our faith*, ſaid the ſenſible diſciples.

Sixthly, It is a precious thing to feel faith quickened by God, and helped by God, againſt the enemy. For then the enemy cannot prevail againſt the ſoul; but the ſoul, through the virtue and power of life, prevails over the enemy in the faith. And this is the great work of a Chriſtian, not only to wreſtle and fight, but to learn ſo to wreſtle, and ſo to fight, as to overcome.

Seventhly,

Seventhly, That in the pure fear (not that which is taught by the precepts of men, but which God puts into the heart) faith hath its ſtrength, and exerciſeth its ſtrength. Oh! who knows the precioufneſs of this fear! The power of faith, the power of life, the power of ſalvation, and everlaſting preſervation is revealed in it. Therefore, ſaith the Lord, when he ſpeaketh of providing for his children in the new covenant, that they ſhall abide with him for ever, and not depart any more from him, as the children of the old covenant did; *I will put my fear in their hearts, and they ſhall not depart from me.* And when the angel preached the everlaſting goſpel, how did he preach it? *Fear God, and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgments is come*, &c. *Rev.* xiv. When the pure fear is felt, when that which is contrary to God is judged; then the goſpel is known, and the work thereof experienced in the heart. And how eaſy is it, when the pure fear is felt, to diſtruſt and deny one's ſelf, and truſt in the Lord! Oh! how weak are the reaſonings and imaginations then, and how ſtrong is the power which ſcatters them, and lifts up the head over them!

Now it concerns every one deeply to conſider, of what nature his faith is, and what virtue is in it, and what it can do in and through the power of the Lord for him; how it fetcheth in the true living nouriſhment every day, how it delivers the ſoul, and gives it victory over that which faith was appointed to deliver from. For he who through the faith overcometh that which is contrary to God, ſhall inherit; and he that fights the good fight of faith, ſhall overcome: but he that overcomes not his enemies, which ſtand in his way, ſhall be ſure to be hindered by them from attaining to his journey's end.

VIII. *Concerning Obedience, ſome Experiences alſo.*

Firſt, True obedience, goſpel-obedience, flows from life, flows from the living faith. If I could obey in all things that God requires of me, yet that would not ſatisfy me, unleſs I felt my obedience flow from the birth of his life in me. *My Father doth all in me*, ſaith Chriſt. This was Chriſt's comfort. And to feel Chriſt do all in the ſoul, is the comfort of every one that truly believes in him.

Secondly, True obedience, goſpel obedience, is natural to the birth which is born of God. It is unnatural to the fleſh, to man's wiſdom, to deny himſelf, and take up the croſs; but it is natural to the birth which is born of God's Spirit. *That which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit*; and it is natural to it to be converſant in, and exerciſed about, that which is ſpiritual.

Thirdly, That honouring and pleaſing, and anſwering the will of the Lord, is the proper aim of the truly obedient. Oh! how do they delight to do the will of God! *I have meat*, ſaith Chriſt, *that ye know not of.* To do the will was his meat and drink: and it is meat and drink to all that are

of

of his nature and Spirit. If I ſhould never have any other reward, but the pleaſure of obedience; yet I could not but ſay and teſtify, that in anſwering the law of the pure life, in keeping the holy ſtatutes and commandments of God's Spirit, there is great reward. But yet there is a crown alſo, and a reaping after this life of every thing that is ſown to the Spirit: and the crown is weighty and everlaſtingly glorious.

Fourthly, Goſpel obedience is exceeding neceſſary in and to the goſpel-ſtate. Mark! *The Lamb is the leader:* and can any be ſaved by him, but they that follow him? When Chriſt calls out of the world, muſt not the ſoul come to him, who is the Shepherd? And muſt not the ſheep daily learn to know his voice, and follow him; even till they come to be acquainted with every moving, drawing, and leading of his Spirit; and ſo come to follow the Lamb whitherſoever he goes? Mark! what a weight Chriſt layeth upon doing. *If ye know theſe things, happy are ye if ye do them.* Why then the diſciple cannot come to happineſs, but in the doing, in the obeying of the will of Chriſt, his Lord and Maſter. And *he that heareth theſe ſayings of mine, and doth them, I will liken him to a wiſe man, that built his houſe upon a rock.* But the believer, without doing the will, is the fooliſh builder, whoſe building will not ſtand. Again ſaith Chriſt, *As the Father hath loved me, ſo have I loved you; continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye ſhall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.* The diſciples whom he moſt dearly loved, muſt keep his commandments, if they will continue in his love. And his apoſtles taught the ſame, even the working out of the ſalvation, and the purifying of the heart, through the obedience of the truth. For mark! There is a covenant of life, a way of life: and how can life be reaped, how can the work of life go on, but in ſubjection and obedience thereto?

Oh! bleſſed is he, who meets with the power of life, which enables to obey; and who is obedient and ſubject to that power. For he that truly believes in Chriſt, is turned by him to his light, and to the power of his Father; and the peace, growth, joy, bleſſedneſs, &c. is witneſſed in ſubjection thereto.

IX. *Concerning the Croſs of Chriſt.*

This I have experienced concerning the croſs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; that it is an inward and ſpiritual thing, producing inward and ſpiritual effects in the mind; and that this is it, even that which ſlays the enmity in the mind, and crucifies to the world, and the affections thereof. *God forbid*, ſaid the apoſtle, *that I ſhould glory, ſave in the croſs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, whereby the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.* Now mark; That which is contrary to the world, and crucifies to the world, that is the croſs. The croſs hath this power, and nothing elſe; and ſo there is

nothing elſe to glory in. *The fleſh luſteth againſt the Spirit, and the Spirit againſt the fleſh; and theſe are contrary one to the other.* Mind, here is the croſs: the Spirit which is contrary to the fleſh, which mortifies the fleſh, thro' the obedience whereof the fleſh is crucified. *If ye, through the Spirit, mortify the deeds of the body, ye ſhall live.* Whatſoever is of and in the Spirit, is contrary to the fleſh. The light of the Spirit is contrary to the darkneſs of the fleſh. The holineſs of the Spirit is contrary to the unholineſs of the corrupt heart. The life of the Spirit is contrary to the life (or rather death) that is in ſin. The power of the Spirit is contrary to the power that is in Satan, and his kingdom. The wiſdom of God is contrary, and a fooliſh thing, to the wiſdom of man. Yea, the new creature, which ſprings from God's Holy Spirit, is contrary and death to the old. Now he that comes hither, out of his own wiſdom, out of his own will, out of his own thoughts, out of his own reaſonings; and comes to a diſcerning of God's Spirit, and to the feeling of his begetting of life in his heart, and his ſtirrings and movings in the life which he hath begotten; and waits here, and receives counſel here; he is taught to deny himſelf, and to join to and take up that, by which Chriſt daily croſſeth and ſubdueth in him that which is contrary to God.

And here is the fight of faith, and the good travel under the croſs, whereby the holy journey is gone, and the enemies (which riſe up to oppoſe in the way) vanquiſhed and overcome. For here is the power revealed; the preſerving power, the leading power, the conquering power of him, who rideth on conquering and to conquer his ſpiritual enemies in the hearts of his children, who know his voice, and are ſubject to him; who daily denying themſelves, and taking up his croſs, follow him. Woe is to them that are at eaſe in Sion, under any thing that is contrary to God; but bleſſings are upon them whoſe dwelling is under the croſs, and who know no eaſe but what it allows. It will make truth, life, holineſs, righteouſneſs, faith, obedience, meekneſs, patience, love, ſeparation from ſin, communion with the Lord, and all the fruits of the Spirit, as natural to them in the renewed ſtate, as ever ſin was in the corrupt ſtate. And in that ſtate they ſhall be able to ſay with Paul; who once complained of his captivity, and that he did what he hated; yet after he had known the power of the croſs, and was crucified with Chriſt, he could then do nothing againſt the truth, but for the truth; yea, then being a conqueror, having overcome the enemies which ſtood in his way, he could do all things through Chriſt that ſtrengthened him. The cauſe of ſo many complaints and bowings down of the head, and going mourning becauſe of the prevailings of the enemy, through temptations, ſin, and corruption, is becauſe the croſs of Chriſt, which is the power of God (which is his ordinance againſt the ſtrength of the enemy) is either not known, or not taken up. And this is the reaſon that many that make a fair ſhew for a while, yet afterwards come to nothing (but are like untimely figs, or like corn upon the houſe-tops, which haſtily

haſtily ſpringeth up, but ſoon withereth) becauſe they either never rightly learn, or keep not to the croſs. For that alone hath power from God to bring down and keep down that which is contrary to him. So that from under the croſs of Chriſt, there is no witneſſing ſalvation or preſervation from the Lord; but out of the limits of the croſs, the enemy hath power to recover and bring back under his dominion again. And whoſoever in his travels leaves the croſs behind him, does draw back unto perdition, and not travel on, in the living faith and newneſs of obedience, towards the ſalvation of the ſoul.

X. *Concerning the Myſtery of Life, and the Myſtery of the Fellowſhip which is therein.*

God is hid from man, as he lies in his ſinful and fallen ſtate; and no man can find or know him, but as he pleaſeth to reveal himſelf by his own bleſſed Spirit. And Chriſt, being God's image, there is no knowing or confeſſing him, or right calling him Lord, but in and by the ſame Spirit, 1 *Cor.* xii. 3. When he appeared in the days of his fleſh, fleſh and blood could not reveal him, but only the Father. And he is the ſame to-day as he was yeſterday. He is not to be known now, but in the ſame Spirit; in his own grace and truth, in a meaſure of his own life. The dead cannot know him; they only know him, who are his ſheep, who are quickened and made alive by him. And this life is a myſtery: none can underſtand it, but they that partake of it. Can a man that is naturally dead, know what the life of nature means? No more can a man that is ſpiritually dead, know what the life of the Spirit means. The natural man may get the words that came from life, and cry up them, and ſpeak great words of the fame of wiſdom, and of her children; but the thing itſelf is hid from them all. Oh! it is a ſtrait gate, at which the birth enters, at which none elſe can enter. The wiſe and prudent knowers and ſearchers after the fleſh (and of the ſcriptures, as they can put meanings upon them and comprehend them) are ſhut out in every age; but there is a babe born of naked truth (born of the pure ſimplicity) admitted by God, while men diſdain and deſpiſe it.

And the fellowſhip of the ſaints is in the life, and in the light, which is this myſtery. The fellowſhip is not outward, but inward. All they that meet together in the outward place, are not in the fellowſhip or worſhip; but only they that meet together in the inward life and Spirit. *They that worſhip the Father, muſt worſhip him in Spirit and truth.* Look, there is the worſhip, there are the worſhippers; they that are in the Spirit, in the truth; they that meet in the Spirit, in the truth, they meet together in the one ſpiritual place, as I may call it. And ſo we own no man after the fleſh, no man according to the appearance; but in the righteous judgment of the Spirit, thoſe only who are of the Spirit. Indeed we are tender, where there is the leaſt beginning of the work of God in any heart; yea, where there

is but ſo much as a conviction of the underſtanding; but men are not preſently of us, who own our principle in words or outward appearance, but only ſuch as are inwardly changed thereby in the heart. It is true, perſons may walk among us, and afterwards go out from us, who were never of us (as it was in the apoſtles days) that were never in the fellowſhip of life with us, whom we could never own in the ſight of the Lord, as being born of him; though we were willing to wait and watch for their good, that they might come to witneſs the true birth. Now from ſuch come the offences, even from the falling off of ſuch as never were truly ingrafted, and alſo from the ſlips of ſuch who are not watchful to that which preſerves. And woe is to the world, becauſe of the offences which cannot but come. For they which are to be approved in the ſight of the Lord, muſt not ſomewhat or other happen to make them manifeſt? And when they are made manifeſt, the world's eye is offended, and is apt to think hardly of, and reproach the truth itſelf, becauſe of them. Bleſſed is the eye which ſees into the myſtery, into the life itſelf, where there is no offence. Truth is one and the ſame for ever.

XI. *Concerning judging according to the appearance, and judging righteous judgment. Judge not according to the appearance* (ſaid Chriſt) *but judge righteous judgment,* John vii. 24.

What is it to judge according to the appearance? and what is it to judge righteous judgment? I ſhall ſpeak what I have experienced, having been deeply exerciſed about this thing. Mark then;

The holy Spirit of Life breatheth upon the heart; and, by his breathing and working there, he quickens and begets life, *John* iii. 8. And that which is begotten and born of him, is begotten and born in his nature, and ſo is of the ſame nature with him, as verſe 6 of that chapter.

Now to that which is born of the Spirit, the Spirit is the leader, the preſerver, the ſupporter, the comforter, the daily quickener. He can do nothing without the Spirit, without the preſent life and power of him that begat him: ſo that all the judgment which the birth of life hath, is from, and of, and in the Holy Spirit of the Father.

And here is true judgment, both concerning righteouſneſs, and againſt all unrighteouſneſs; ſo that keep to the life, keep to the Spirit, keep to the birth, keep to the power, then is the wiſdom and righteous judgment of God revealed: but any that go out of this, and meaſure without this, they meaſure in the unrighteouſneſs; and though they ſearch the ſcriptures, and think in themſelves they meaſure from the ſcriptures, yet they are miſtaken, and meaſure but from their own knowledge and apprehenſions upon the ſcriptures, as the ſcribes and phariſees did, when they ſeemed to conclude, upon ſearching the ſcriptures, that Chriſt could not be the Meſſiah, *John* vii. 52. *Search and look* (ſaid they) *for out of Galilee ariſeth no prophet.*

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How then can this Galilean be he? See by the ſcriptures if this can be the Chriſt.

It is ſaid of Chriſt, *He ſhall not judge after the ſight of his eyes, nor reprove after the hearing of his ears, but with righteouſneſs ſhall he judge*, &c. *Iſa.* xi. 3, 4. Chriſt judged righteous judgment. How came he to judge ſo? Why; he judged in and with the Spirit. He kept to the Spirit's judgment. The Spirit of the Lord reſted upon him, and made him quick of underſtanding in the fear of the Lord, *ver.* 2, 3. And no man can judge aright concerning the things of God, but in and by the ſame Spirit. How ſhall I know whether my duties be right, my prayers right, my ways right, my worſhip right, my faith right, my hope of the right kind, my knowledge and underſtanding of the ſcriptures right, *&c.?* Why there is none but one can determine. He who begetteth life, knows whether that which is in thee be from his life; and whether that which thou offereſt to him, be truly living or no: and when the Lord ſeparates the living from the dead, what will remain in many that make great profeſſions at this day?

I would have no man miſtaken about theſe things; I know many are deeply miſtaken, as their own hearts will one day acknowledge, when the Lord ſhall make manifeſt to them, how they have called evil good, and good evil; and put darkneſs for light, and light for darkneſs. Indeed it is juſt as it was in the days of Chriſt's appearing outwardly in a body of fleſh. The ſame life, the ſame Spirit, is denied now as was then. Then the Jews cried up Chriſt to come; but they then ſpiritually ſaw him not. They ſaw the fleſh (or outward form) but they ſaw not him who dwelt in that fleſh. And though the world of Chriſtians now acknowledge Chriſt is come, and did appear, yet neither do they know him who did appear, but deny his life, his Spirit, his virtue, his power, which is revealed in this day of his love and goodneſs to the eyes of the children of the true wiſdom. *Oh! let not fleſh judge: be ſilent, O all fleſh, before the Lord, and ceaſe judging, for he is ariſen to judge. He is judge in the midſt of his people, and he will judge the heathen alſo.*

And every one bring this near. Wait to feel fleſh judged in thee, and brought down in thee, that it may not judge in thee; but Spirit and life may be exalted, and ſit upon the throne in thy heart: and when life is exalted, and doth begin to judge, Oh! take heed of hearkening to the fleſh, of letting in the judgment of fleſh afterwards, leſt the Spirit be grieved and quenched! For the wiſdom of the fleſh is near, and will be ſtriving to get in and recover its ſeat again; and if the watch be not ſingly kept to God's Holy Spirit, ſomewhat elſe will be judging in thee, which will judge according to the appearance of things to thy mind, and ſo thou wilt miſs of the true and righteous judgment of God's Spirit.

XII. *A queſtion anſwered about knowing God's Spirit.*

Queſt. *How ſhall I know God's Spirit? How ſhall I know the motions thereof? How may I know whether the faith and hope in my heart be from him? Whether my prayers and deſires ariſe thence,* &c.

Anſw. No man of himſelf, or by any way he of himſelf can take, can know God's Spirit: there muſt firſt be a capacity given before any man can know the Spirit of the Lord; his life, his power, muſt firſt be felt, and ſomewhat quickened, ſomewhat formed by him, ſomewhat begotten of him, which is Spirit, and this can know him. Now man in this may know him, but out of this can never know him. Therefore this is the great ſkill, and diligence, and wiſdom of a Chriſtian, to keep to this, to wait for this, to have his eye toward the pure ſpring of wiſdom, that, when it ſprings, he may diſcern and receive it; and when that which is of a contrary nature ſprings, he may diſcern it under all its deceitful appearances, and turn from it. For out of the heart are the iſſues both of life and death. There is all manner of deceivableneſs of unrighteouſneſs in the unrighteous nature, in the unrighteous ſpirit; and if the watch be not diligently kept, it is eaſy to be deceived at any time: but the true ſeed, the holy ſeed, the living ſeed, the elect ſeed, the immortal ſeed, is never deceived. Oh! bleſſed are they who have their eyes opened and kept open in it, to diſcern the myſtery of godlineſs and the myſtery of iniquity, that they may be preſerved ſafe in the one, out of the reach of the other!

XIII. *Some queries concerning the ſeed of the kingdom, in which the kingdom itſelf is contained (as the nature and ſubſtance of things is contained in the ſeed thereof) and out of which it ſpringeth up and ariſeth in the heart.*

Quer. 1. What is that ſeed which is ſpoken of, 1 *John* iii. 9. which remaineth in thoſe that are born of God, and preſerveth out of ſin thoſe that are led by it and comprehended in it? Is it not the ſeed of the kingdom?

Quer. 2. Do not the natural herbs and flowers, the natural plants and trees, grow from a natural ſeed? Do not the ſpiritual plants, the ſpiritual trees, the trees of righteouſneſs, grow from the ſeed of righteouſneſs?

Quer. 3. Was it not the great doctrine of Chriſt to preach the kingdom? and how did he preach it? Did he not preach it as a ſeed, as a grain of muſtard-ſeed? and did he not liken this ſpiritual ſeed to leaven, to a precious pearl, to treaſure hid in a field, to a piece of ſilver loſt, *&c.* Oh! how happy is he who knows and enjoys the thing itſelf which Chriſt preached! All the prophets propheſied concerning him; and when he came, this was his doctrine, that men ſhould mind this, look after this, purchaſe this, poſſeſs this,

this, feel this planted and grow up in them, and themſelves ingrafted into and growing up in it.

Quer. 4. Can any man be born of God, and not born of this ſeed? Can any man be born of this ſeed, and not be born of God?

Quer. 5. How doth grace and truth come by Jeſus Chriſt? Doth it not grow up from this ſeed? can it grow up any other way in any heart?

Quer. 6. Is not ſalvation felt and witneſſed in every heart (of thoſe that are in any meaſure redeemed) as this ſeed grows up and overſhadows them? Was not this the ſalvation ready to be revealed in the laſt time, 1 *Pet.* i. 10. whereof the apoſtle Peter himſelf was made a partaker? *chap.* v. 10. In the law were the ſhadows of good things to come; but in the goſpel the ſubſtance, the ſeed itſelf, is revealed.

Quer. 7. Is it not the right beginning in religion to begin in the Spirit? and can any begin in the Spirit, but he that begins in and with the ſeed of the kingdom?

Quer. 8. Is it not the main and chief thing in religion to know this ſeed, to feel this ſeed, to be joined to this ſeed, and abide in this ſeed?

Quer. 9. Is not all that flows from this ſeed true and certain? is not the knowledge certain here? the faith here? the love here? the peace here? the joy here? the righteouſneſs here? From this true root, can there grow or ſhoot forth any thing but that which is true? Oh! every breathing here is from pure life, and precious in the eye of the Father. Is there any certainty elſewhere? Oh! when the Lord appears, will he not diſown all the religion and worſhip which is not of this growth?

Quer. 10. But ſome may ſay, how may I know this ſeed, and how may I be joined to it?

Anſwer. In the quickening life mayeſt thou know it, and no-where elſe. Didſt thou ever feel that which quickened thy heart towards the Lord? Therein and thereby, at that time, thou mayeſt feel an eye and heart opened, which can truly ſee and know ſomewhat of God: and, keeping thy eye to the quickening power of God, as that ſtirs, moves and operates, in thee and upon thee, thou mayeſt know again and know more.

Therefore eye the power which quickens, and eye the ſeed which it reveals and raiſeth in thee, and wait to feel the power ſubjecting thee to the ſeed, that thou mayeſt come under it, and it may come over thee, and preſs down in thee all that is contrary to its pure nature.

And as thou comeſt hither, thou wilt find that which death hath no power over; and, as thou abideſt there, thou ſhalt find it to have no power over thee. For, of a truth, in the holy covenant of life and peace, death never had nor can have power; but he who abideth in him who is the covenant, who is the ſhepherd, who is the love, who is the wiſdom and power of God, witneſſeth there a ſure defence and ſtrong tower, where ſalvation is for a wall and bulwark againſt the enemy.

There

There are many ſorts of talkers concerning the thing, but there are few travellers into it; but he alone who is a true traveller into it, and takes up his reſt there, certainly knows and can truly witneſs what is to be found there. And this is the reaſon that ſo many (who ſeem great and experienced knowers) cannot receive our teſtimony, becauſe they know neither the ſeed nor its voice, concerning which and whereby we teſtify. But wiſdom is juſtified of her children; and they that know the voice of the ſhepherd, know his preſent appearance in this our day, which is contrary to the wiſdom and knowledge of all other ſeeds and births whatſoever. *He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear*; but he that hath not the true ear, cannot hear the true teſtimony, though it ſhould ever ſo often be declared unto him. But bleſſed is he that knows and ſtumbles not at the appearances of the ſeed and power of life in his own heart, but is turned from the darkneſs to the light there, and from the power of Satan to the manifeſtation of God's Spirit there. For the end of words (even of Chriſt's own directions in the days of his fleſh) is to turn men to the holy life and power from whence the words came; and thither man is to travel, and therein to center, waiting on the Lord, in the way of his judgments and tender mercies, to witneſs a tranſlation from darkneſs to light, and from the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of the dear Son; which kingdom is at firſt but as a grain of muſtard-ſeed, and muſt be ſo known and ſo received.

And now let every ſerious heart examine concerning himſelf. Doſt thou know the kingdom? is the ſeed grown in thee? doth it overſpread thee? Art thou in it as in a kingdom? doſt thou feel it overſhadowing thee? art thou in unity with it? doth it ſpeak peace to thee from the Lord? Is the wall of partition broken down in thee? Is there of twane made one new man? Doſt thou feel that which is contrary to Chriſt ſubdued in thee by his power? and his holy nature, life, and Spirit, reigning over it? Canſt thou read that ſcripture ſenſibly and experimentally, *if ye through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body, ye ſhall live?*

Ah! how miſerably do men talk of Chriſt, the power of God, and miſs of the effect and work of his power in them!

Faith is a powerful thing, it gives victory, (true faith gives victory) it ſcatters that which ſtands between, and gives real acceſs to God, and lets in his pure, freſh, living virtue, upon the heart.

Love is a powerful thing, it conſtrains to obedience: and the heart that is circumciſed to love the Lord God, Oh! how doth life flow from him into it!

Oh! away with empty notions, and come to the miniſtration of the Spirit, where the knowledge is living, the faith victorious, the love pure and undefiled, the worſhip truly ſpiritual, even flowing from, and comprehended in, the life and virtue of the Spirit. Oh! that all that truly breathe after the Lord, might be gathered hither, found here, and dwell here. *Amen.*

POSTSCRIPT to the EXPERIENCES.

PERSONS that have had ſome true touches of life, and true breathings after the Lord, yet not having their eye fixed rightly upon him, nor diſcerning from whence thoſe come, may eaſily loſe the true ſenſe of life, and another birth of another nature ſpring up in them inſtead thereof. This was it we generally wanted in the day of our former profeſſion, even the diſcerning of that, and fixing upon that, which begat life in us; through want whereof, many of the moſt tender-hearted came to a loſs; whom the Lord at length ſhewed mercy to, manifeſting to them the light of their eyes, and the ſtay of their ſouls. Now to all that have been gathered hither by the Lord, life hath been renewed, and their former experiences (of the Lord and his goodneſs to them in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt) reſtored again with advantage. And here they ſenſibly ſee, and daily experience, that nothing is of their own works, but all of grace and mercy in and through Chriſt, in whom they are created unto good works, which God before ordained that we ſhould walk in them. And here the glory is revealed; the glory of life, the glory of peace with the Lord, the glory of righteouſneſs in and through his Son, the glory of victory over the ſoul's enemies, and of leading captivity captive, and treading upon the necks of kings, even of mighty luſts, which mightily prevailed over and oppreſſed the ſoul, before the captain of our ſalvation appeared in the power and authority of his own Spirit. But bleſſed be the Lord, there is not only this glory revealed, but there is a defence over the glory; for there is that revealed which is able to defend it, and doth defend it, in the hearts of many, and in the living aſſemblies which have been gathered by God's holy power; which holy power (which gathered) daily quickens and overſhadows, and is a rock unto, and will be ſo for ever, even to all that abide with him in his holy covenant; but out of the limits of that into which God gathers, and wherein and whereby he preſerves, there is no defence to any. The curſed thing, the unclean thing, the earthly ſpirit, the earthly mind and wiſdom, the Lord hath excluded, and it is to be excluded out of his camp for evermore, that the inward Iſrael may be kept holy to the Lord, and may ſerve and worſhip the Lord in the beauty of the inward holineſs, as the outward Iſrael was outwardly, to be, and to do, in that outward miniſtration of the ſhadows of the goſpel ſtate.

Some Scriptures very ſweet, and neceſſary to be experienced in the Goſpel State.

This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent, John xvii. 3. There is a knowledge of God and

Chriſt, which is life eternal: and there is a knowledge of them (or at leaſt that which men call ſo) which is not life eternal. The knowledge which is life eternal, is that knowledge which God gives to his own birth; even the ſpiritual knowledge which God gives to thoſe which are born of the Spirit; which is the knowledge of the myſtery of God, and of Chriſt in the myſtery, inwardly appearing, and working in the heart againſt the myſtery of ſin and death. Oh! precious is the birth to which God gives this knowledge, and precious is the knowledge which he giveth to it. The knowledge (or that which men call knowledge) which is not life eternal, is that knowledge which man can get and comprehend from without, of himſelf, without the enlightenings and quickenings of God's Holy Spirit and power inwardly felt, and operating in the heart.

No man can ſay that Jeſus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghoſt, 1 Cor. xii. 3. It is precious to witneſs that confeſſing and acknowledging Jeſus to be the Lord, which is by the Holy Ghoſt. For only they that are governed by the Holy Ghoſt can ſo confeſs him. The devil did confeſs Jeſus to be the Holy One, the Son of the living God, *&c.* and many now confeſs Jeſus to be the Lord, in the ſame ſpirit, being alienated from the life of God, and having no true ſenſe or underſtanding of that. But there is a confeſſion which cannot ariſe but from God's Spirit, and from the knowledge, ſenſe, and underſtanding which he gives; bleſſed are they that experience that.

It is written in the prophets, and they ſhall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me, John vi. 45. Ah! bleſſed is he that can in true underſtanding ſay, The Lord hath made good this promiſe to me! he is become my teacher. I have heard his voice, as truly and certainly, inwardly in my heart, as ever I heard the voice of Satan there. He hath revealed his Son, his pure, holy, living child Jeſus in me. He hath drawn me to his Son; he hath taught me to come to his Son: and indeed ſo ſoon as ever I heard and learned of the Father, I could not but come to the Son, and receive the Son, and give up myſelf to him: and he hath received me, and daily preſerveth me from death, and the ſting and power thereof, and giveth unto me eternal life.

He that hath the Son, hath life; and he that hath not the Son, hath not life, 1 John v. 12. Ah! this is abundantly experienced! bleſſed be the name of the Lord! Many who had not life, while they had not the Son, but mourned and lamented deeply after him (the Spirit of the Lord being grieved in them, and his life not poſſeſſed by them) the Father revealing his Son in them, and giving him to them, and they enjoying and poſſeſſing him, feel that they are daily in the enjoyment and poſſeſſion of pure and freſh life in him.

My fleſh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my fleſh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him, John vi. 55, 56. We are of his fleſh, and of his bone, ſaid they that did eat his fleſh, and drink his

his blood. They that eat Chriſt the one bread, are by that food made partakers of his divine nature, and become one bread (for we being many, are one bread, as ſaid the apoſtle); ſo that now they are no longer darkneſs, but light in the Lord. Oh! the pure fleſh and blood of the immaculate Lamb! Oh! the incorruptible food which gives life to the ſoul! Oh! the living word! Oh! the milk of this word, the milk of the heavenly breaſt, which nouriſheth the babes! but the bread, the fleſh, the blood, is ſtronger nouriſhment. Oh! how brightly might this be opened, in the demonſtration of life, to the ſpiritual ear and underſtanding! but the carnal-minded are thick and groſs, being drowned in their own apprehenſions and ſenſe of the letter, but having no ſenſe of the myſtery, what it is myſtically to eat and drink the fleſh and blood of Chriſt (of him who is life, and gives life) and to dwell together with him in the one Spirit, light, life, and power eternal.

For with thee is the fountain of life; in thy light ſhall we ſee light, Pſal. xxxvi. 9. Oh! bleſſed are they that can experimentally ſpeak thus, who know the fountain of life, and dwell there, where light ſhines more and more!

Ho, every one that thirſteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat: yea come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price. Wherefore do ye ſpend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which ſatisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your ſoul delight itſelf in fatneſs. Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your ſoul ſhall live; and I will make an everlaſting covenant with you, even the ſure mercies of David, Iſaiah lv. 1, 2, 3. Here's happineſs, true happineſs, full happineſs! He that experiences this one portion of ſcripture is happy. He that knows the true thirſt after the true waters, and comes to the waters which he thirſts after, and knows how to buy, and hath bought the wine and milk which is to be had at the waters (Oh! who knows what this buying is! this is beyond all talk and outward profeſſion concerning the thing, concerning the precious pearl; this is the real, hearty trafficking of the wiſe merchant for it). And then to hearken diligently, and eat that which is good, and to have the ſoul delight itſelf in the fatneſs of God's houſe, in the riches and fatneſs of his goodneſs and mercy in Chriſt Jeſus; and not only to taſte of mercy, but to witneſs it ſure in the everlaſting covenant, that God will never be wroth with me more, never be a ſtranger to me more, never depart from me more, nor ſuffer me to depart from him; but preſerve me pure and chaſte to him, through his love ſhed abroad in my heart, and his holy fear, which conſtrains me to abide with him, and to keep his commandments.

But whoſoever drinketh of the water that I ſhall give him, ſhall never thirſt: but the water that I ſhall give him, ſhall be in him a well of water ſpringing up into everlaſting life, John iv. 14. Is not this an univerſal promiſe, to be made good to every one that drinks of the water of life, of the water that Chriſt gives? Did not Chriſt promiſe it ſhould be a well? a ſpringing well?

The fountain is of a ſpringing nature: and is not every drop of the ſame nature? of a living nature? of a ſpringing nature? He that rightly drinks, doth he not receive a well? Oh! the water which Chriſt giveth! doth it not become a well in the true diſciple, in the living diſciple, out of which well the water is ſtill ſpringing and flowing, to nouriſh up with life and unto life, even with life of an everlaſting nature, and unto life everlaſting. Oh! the pure glory that is revealed in the goſpel-diſpenſation! why is it ſo hid from mens eyes, who profeſs themſelves to know the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and to be his diſciples?

For the life was manifeſted, and we have ſeen it; and bear witneſs, and ſhew unto you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifeſted unto us. That which we have ſeen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye alſo may have fellowſhip with us; and truly our fellowſhip is with the Father, and with his Son Jeſus Chriſt, 1 John i. 2, 3. This is precious to experience the life inwardly manifeſted, and to come out of death inwardly felt, into life inwardly manifeſted, and ſo to come into the holy fellowſhip with the Father and Son, and with the ſaints in light: for he that comes out of the darkneſs into the light, comes out of the fellowſhip of the dead into the fellowſhip of the living.

Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye ſhall find reſt unto your ſouls. For my yoke is eaſy, and my burthen is light, Matt. xi. 28, 29, 30. This invitation of Chriſt was to be fulfilled in the hearts of his diſciples; and it is precious inwardly to witneſs it effectually in the heart, as really as ever it was ſpoken by him. To be able to ſay, in the evidence and demonſtration of his Spirit, It is true, I did labour, I was heavy laden, none could eaſe or help me, till he called, till he knocked at the door of my heart, and till I came to him and received him in; and he hath made good his word to my ſoul; he hath given me reſt from my labours and heavy loads. He hath laid his yoke upon me, and I have took it and borne it, and have learned of him to be meek and lowly in heart like him, and I have found reſt to my ſoul. And now I ſhall never complain more of his yoke or burthen, he hath made it, and doth daily make it, ſo eaſy and light to me.

And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an underſtanding, that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jeſus Chriſt. This is the true God and eternal life, 1 John v. 20. There is an inward, ſpiritual coming of the Son of God into the heart, by which coming (to them that receive him) he giveth a new and ſpiritual underſtanding, whereby they know him that is true (and without it they cannot) and are ingrafted into him and found in him; partaking of his life and righteouſneſs, to the glory of God the Father; and ſo in true underſtanding are able to ſay, *Lo this is the God, this is the Saviour we waited for. This is the true or very God, and eternal life.* What are all notions about

about God, and about his Son Chriſt Jeſus, to this inward ſenſe and experience of them?

God who commanded the light to ſhine out of darkneſs, hath ſhined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt, 2 Cor. iv. 6. Oh! how precious is it to be able to witneſs this in meaſure! to experience God ſhining upon my tabernacle (as Job ſpeaks, Job xxix. 2, 3.) and by his light my walking through darkneſs! It is true, Chriſt was the light, he had the fullneſs of light, and the apoſtles a very great proportion: but, bleſſed be the Lord, I have received ſome, and am changed by it, and become light in the Lord; and walk with God, and dwell with God in the light, even as he is light, and dwells and walks in the light. Is not this a bleſſed teſtimony? and is not he bleſſed who can ſet his ſeal to it?

Which veil is done away in Chriſt, 2 Cor. iii. 14. It was promiſed of old, that in the mountain, where God would make the feaſt of fat things, he would deſtroy, ſwallow up, or do away the veil, or that which veils the life and glory of the Lord from man, and hinders it from being revealed in him, *Iſaiah* xxv. 6, 7. Now in Chriſt there is no veil; in his light, life, ſpirit, and power, there is no veil: where they are inwardly manifeſted and received, the veil is done away, and the glory of the myſtery revealed and beheld.

If ye continue in my word, then are ye my diſciples indeed; and ye ſhall know the truth, and the truth ſhall make you free, John viii. 31, 32. What is this word which the diſciples of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt are to continue in? Is it any leſs than Spirit and life? And what is it to be a diſciple indeed, but to learn the law of life at his mouth, and to continue therein? And what is the truth which makes free? Is it not the living Truth (the Word which lives and abides for ever) the powerful Truth, the operative Truth? This cuts between a man and his lovers; this divides between ſoul and ſpirit, joints and marrow, and makes the ſoul free from that evil ſpirit which hath embondaged it. It ſanctifieth, it cleanſeth, it reneweth, it quickeneth, it giveth ſtrength, it maketh free from the ſoul's enemies, from the bondage of ſin and corruption, and brings into the glorious liberty of the ſons of God: and they that are made free from ſin by that which is contrary to ſin, and which ſubdues, overcomes, and deſtroys ſin, they doubtleſs are free indeed. Oh! precious is it to experience this, even the truth that is free from ſin, and makes free from ſin all that truly know it, and are joined to it, and live and abide in it!

For ſin ſhall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace, Rom. vi. 14. What's the law? what's the miniſtration of the law? Is it not the miniſtration of the letter? of that which is holy and righteous, by an outward or literal command? What's grace? Is it not the inward teacher, which inwardly inſtructeth to deny ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, and to live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly, *&c?* Is it not the miniſtration

ſtration of the Spirit and power? Is it not the miniſtration of the new covenant, where the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus is written in the heart, and the commandment of life made eaſy by the power of the Lord Jeſus, who manifeſts himſelf within to make willing unto, and to ſtrengthen to obedience?

Now they that are under this grace, under this Spirit, under this power, doth it not break the power and dominion of ſin in them, and ſet them free therefrom? Can ſin break in upon thoſe who dwell under the ſhadow of the Almighty? Indeed a man may be under a literal diſpenſation of holy commands againſt ſin, and yet be under the power of ſin: but he that is gathered under the wing of Chriſt, under the grace and Spirit of the goſpel, turned from Satan's power to God's power, and within the wall and bulwark thereof, he witneſſeth this true, *Sin hath not dominion, ſin cannot have dominion, ſin ſhall not have dominion over you.* No device of the enemy ſhall be able to hurt or deſtroy on God's holy mountain; for his light ſhines there to diſpel the darkneſs, and his power is revealed there, to ſcatter and daſh in pieces the ſtrength of the enemy whenever it appears.

Upon all the glory ſhall be a defence, Iſaiah iv. 5. Oh! the Lord God, by the Spirit and power of the goſpel, in the day thereof, is bringing many ſons to glory, into great, inward, ſpiritual glory; yea, into exceeding glory (for the miniſtration of the Spirit exceeds in glory). And as God hath ordained this glorious miniſtration for his ſons and daughters under the new covenant, ſo by the Spirit and power of the new covenant, when it breaks forth, he is daily working, tranſlating, and changing them, out of the earthly nature and image, into his own divine nature, into his own heavenly glory, 2 *Cor.* iii. 18. And, bleſſed be the Lord, the defence of his power is ſpread over the glory of his holy mountain, ſo that nothing can make a prey of, or devour the birth of life, or deprive of the inheritance of life there. The Lord doth not only give a bleſſed lot and lines in pleaſant places, but he maintains the lot of his children; ſo that they can dwell in their Father's houſe, and feed on the heavenly food and rich dainties of the kingdom, in the majeſty of the name of the Lord their God; which is ſuch a dread unto the enemies, and ſuch a defence about them, as none can make afraid: but they are kept in perfect peace, in perfect reſt, in pure love, out of which life ſprings and flows continually.

And in that day thou ſhalt ſay, O Lord, I will praiſe thee; though thou waſt angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comforteſt me. Behold, God is my ſalvation: I will truſt and not be afraid; for the Lord Jehovah is my ſtrength and ſong, he alſo is become my ſalvation. Therefore with joy ſhall ye draw water out of the wells of ſalvation, Iſaiah xii. 1, 2, 3. Oh! precious to witneſs the inward ſpiritual day of redemption and deliverance, wherein praiſes from a living ſenſe naturally ſpring up to the Lord! to witneſs the reproofs at an end, the anger, indignation, trouble, and ſorrow at an end, and the Comforter come, miniſtering peace, joy, and comfort to the ſoul!

Ah!

Ah! when the Lord is felt, the ſalvation (his preſence, his power, his life, his virtue the ſalvation); when faith ſprings towards him, and the fear of the enemy (or concerning the enemy) is baniſhed; when he is experienced to be the ſoul's daily ſtrength againſt him; yea, and doth ſo deliver, that inſtead of the former fear, becauſe of the fury and oppreſſion of the enemy, the ſoul can now ſing, becauſe of that ſtrength and heavenly authority, which the Lord putteth forth and exerciſeth in the heart againſt him! When the well of life, the well of ſalvation, the Saviour's well, is kept open, and the Philiſtines, the uncircumciſed ſpirit, power and nature, caſt out, that they can ſtop it no more; but the ſoul can draw the water of life out of the well and fountain of life with joy; ah! then the goſpel-diſpenſation is indeed known, and the bleſſed eſtate thereof witneſſed and experienced!

I counſel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayeſt be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayeſt be cloathed, and that the ſhame of thy nakedneſs do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-ſalve, that thou mayeſt ſee, Rev. iii. 18. What is the gold tried in the fire, which man is to buy of Chriſt, that he may be made rich therewith? What is the white raiment which the ſoul is to be cloathed with, without which it is naked in God's ſight, and in the ſight of the truly diſcerning (and there is a time when the ſhame of its nakedneſs will appear more generally, as it doth already to the eye of the ſpiritual man who judgeth all things)? What is the eye-ſalve wherewith the eye is to be anointed, or it cannot ſee? Is it not precious to purchaſe this gold and raiment of Chriſt, and to have this eye-ſalve to anoint the eye with, and to keep it open that it may daily ſee its way, and walk in the light of the Lord? Certainly this is all inward and ſpiritual, as a remnant witneſs it this day; glory to the Lord God.

But the anointing which ye have received of him, abideth in you; and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the ſame anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lye; and even as it hath taught you, ye ſhall abide in him, 1 John ii. 27. The outward anointing was a ſhadow of the inward, and had a glory in it under the diſpenſation of the law; and the inward anointing in the goſpel-diſpenſation is ſpiritual and divine, and exceeding glorious. Chriſt, the anointed one, anoints all his. No being a ſon, without being begotten by the Spirit and power of the Father; and no abiding a ſon, but by the virtue and power of the ſame Spirit, remaining in and with the ſoul; ſo that every ſon receives of the anointing of the Father: Chriſt received the Spirit, the fullneſs, that he might give to them a proportion. Now to experience this anointing, and to experience it abiding and teaching all things; and to know this voice, the voice of the ſhepherd, the voice of the anointing, which the ſheep ſtill finds to be true, and no lie; and to abide in the vine, in the life, in the Spirit, in the power, as this Spirit or anointing teacheth: Oh! here's the ſweet ſtate, the clear ſtate, the bleſſed ſtate! Here the promiſes and bleſſings are Yea and Amen in Chriſt:

and

and the ſoul can ſay, he is faithful and juſt who hath promiſed, who hath opened the treaſures of life to his family, to his houſe, to his children, to his ſervants, and bleſſeth them with all ſpiritual bleſſings, in heavenly things, in Chriſt.

Surely his ſalvation is nigh them that fear him, that glory may dwell in our land: mercy and truth are met; righteouſneſs and peace have kiſſed. Truth ſhall ſpring out of the earth; and righteouſneſs ſhall look down from heaven. Yea, the Lord ſhall give that which is good; and our land ſhall yield her increaſe. Righteouſneſs ſhall go before him, and ſhall ſet us in the way of his ſteps, Pſal. lxxxv. 9. to the end. Is it not precious to witneſs that fear of God in the heart to which ſalvation is nigh, and the land wherein glory dwells? Where mercy and truth meet, righteouſneſs and peace kiſs? Where truth ſprings out of the earth, and righteouſneſs looks down from heaven? Where God gives that which is good, and the land of the living yields the increaſe of life to him? Where righteouſneſs goes before him, and he ſets his in the way of his ſteps? Where the Lamb goes before, and the way is not known, but as the Lamb goes before and leads into it? Where God is the ſhepherd, and the ſoul doth not want, becauſe he maketh it to lie down in paſtures of tender graſs, and leadeth by the waters of quietneſs (where it drinks of the brook in the way) and in the paths of righteouſneſs for his name's ſake? See *Pſal.* xxiii. Is there not a kingdom of darkneſs, a land of iniquity inwardly? and do not they that dwell there, and ſit there, dwell in darkneſs, and ſit in the region and ſhadow of death? And is there not a travel out of this land into the holy land (the land of light, the land of the living) and a tranſlation out of this kingdom into the kingdom of the dear Son? And is not God the ſhepherd there? Chriſt the biſhop of the ſoul there? and doth not he overſee and take care of ſouls there, leading them into freſh paſtures, and by the ſoft flowing waters? Is not ſalvation nigh there, yea, round about that land? Do not mercy and truth meet there? righteouſneſs and peace kiſs there? yea, doth not the glory of the Moſt High dwell in, and overſhadow that land? Is not the eye of the Lord upon it for good, from one end of the year to the other? doth not he watch over it night and day, that none hurt it, and water it in the proper ſeaſons? Oh! who can utter the goodneſs and glory of the Lord which is revealed and ſhines here!

Rev. iii. 20. *Behold, I ſtand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will ſup with him, and he with me.* Here are ſeveral things, which, in their order and ſeaſons, the living come to a certain and ſenſible experience of.

As, Firſt, Chriſt ſtanding at the door and knocking. What is the door at which he ſtands? and how doth he knock? How doth the contrary ſpirit knock? how doth his Spirit knock?

Secondly, What is his voice? and how is his voice heard? To hear Wiſdom's cry within, in the inward ſtreets; his call at the door, at which he would enter;

enter; muſt not the true ear in ſome meaſure be opened firſt? Can any one hear without an ear?

Thirdly, What it is to open the door? There is a door-keeper's ſtate to be witneſſed, and the right door-keeper knows how to open and how to ſhut the door, and is exerciſed in opening and ſhutting the door. The king of glory is to be opened to, and let in; but no wolf, no ſtranger, no ſtrange ſpirit, is to be hearkened or opened to.

Fourthly, What Chriſt's coming in is at the door opened to him? When he knocks, would he not come in? Would he ſtand always at the door knocking? Nay, nay; when the door is opened at which he knocks, he who is the reſurrection and the life enters; the king of righteouſneſs, the king of peace, enters; he who is the wiſdom and power of God enters; and what becomes of the power and goods of the enemy then? Doth he not kill and deſtroy them? Doth he not conſume and devour them? Doth he not empty the houſe of them, and garniſh the houſe with that which is truly pure, glorious, and beautiful?

Laſtly, What is it to have him ſup with the ſoul? And what is it for the ſoul to ſup with him? Is not here eating and drinking in his Father's kingdom? Doth he not firſt deſtroy the devil's kingdom, and then ſet up his own kingdom? And doth he not faſt with the ſoul, and feaſt with the ſoul, in the kingdom which he ſets up there? Oh! that all men knew how near he who is eternal life is to them! Doth not God ſearch the heart? Is not he near the heart? Doth not his light ſhine there, in the midſt of man's darkneſs and corruption? Doth not his power reach thither, and aſſault and trouble the enemy? Doth not his pure love wherewith he loveth man pierce thither? Doth he not knock? Doth he not call? Doth he not touch? Doth he not draw? Doth he not give, at times, ſome living tender ſenſe to many hearts, who too much neglect and deſpiſe him, and regard not the day of his tender viſiting them, and calling after them? Oh! how is the love of God, the Spirit of God, the life of God, the wiſdom of God, the power of God, the drawings and inſtructions of his grace day by day reſiſted by the wiſdom and will of the fleſh, in thoſe that are born thereof, and hearken thereto, and ſo live after the fleſh, and not after that which reproves the fleſh?

Many more ſcriptures might be mentioned, and alſo ſenſibly and livingly witneſſed to; but theſe are enough to give a taſte. The Lord open mens underſtandings into the thing itſelf, and give them the key which opens into the truth, even into the myſtery thereof, wherein is the hidden life and virtue. *Amen.*

A few Words concerning the true Chriſt; how it may be certainly and infallibly known which is he.

This queſtion relates not to his outward appearance, in the days of his fleſh; but to his inward and ſpiritual appearance, how it may be known. To which the anſwer on my heart is, Even after the ſame way, and by the ſame means is he to be known in his inward appearance, as he was known in his outward; which was by the revealing of the Father. For *none knows the Son but by the Father, and he to whom the Father reveals him.* And when Simon Peter confeſſed him to be Chriſt, the Son of the living God, *Bleſſed* (ſaid he) *art thou, Simon Bar-Jona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven,* Matth. xvi. 16, 17.

And if none could know Chriſt in his appearance in the fleſh, notwithſtanding ſo many manifeſt and expreſs prophecies concerning him, but ſuch only to whom the Father revealed him; how ſhall any know his inward and ſpiritual appearance, unleſs they be taught of the Father, and hear and learn of him ſo to do?

But more particularly to ſhew how the Father revealed his Son, and how they came to know in that day that he was the Son of the living God, the Holy One, the anointed Saviour; and that the ſame way, and by the ſame means, people that will truly know him, muſt come to the knowledge of him now;

Firſt, They came to know him by the manifeſtation of the life that was in him, by the fullneſs of the grace and truth which dwelt in him, and put itſelf forth, ſo as to be diſcerned by the inward and ſpiritual eye in them. *For the life was manifeſted,* 1 John i. 2. The life which was in him was manifeſted to the ſpiritual eye which was in them; and thus they came to know him.

Secondly, By his voice and knocks. Thus ſaid he concerning his ſheep in thoſe days, *that they knew his voice,* John x. 4. Oh! he hath ſuch a voice, as none hath but he! He ſpeaks in his Father's authority (not as the ſcribes, not as earthly-wiſe, learned men); he ſpeaks in the evidence and demonſtration of God's Spirit. The words which he ſpeaks are Spirit and life; they that hear his voice live; and when he ſtands at the door and knocks, he pierceth deep.

Oh! the beatings of his hand upon the tender and ſenſible hearts and conſciences! Oh! his ſecret reproofs, his ſecret inſtructions, his ſecret quickenings and enlightenings! How did they, and how do they, eternally make him manifeſt in the hearts and conſciences of his?

Thirdly, By his baptiſm, or by his baptizing into his own Spirit and power. While people were in expectation, and muſed in their hearts of John, whether he were the Chriſt or not, John anſwers the caſe, and tells them how they might diſcern and know the true Chriſt. It is not I, who baptize

baptize with water; but he that baptizeth *with the Holy Ghoſt, and with fire; whoſe fan is in his hand,* &c. *Luke* iii. 15, 16, 17. Was not this *then* and is not this *now*, the way to know the true Chriſt? He that knoweth him who inwardly and ſpiritually baptizeth, him who hath the fan, who inwardly fanneth and purgeth the floor, gathering in the wheat, and burning up the chaff, doth not he inwardly, truly, and ſpiritually know Chriſt? He that knoweth the word, which is quick and powerful, and ſharper than any two-edged ſword, piercing even to the dividing aſunder of ſoul and ſpirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a diſcerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart; doth not he know *the word which was in the beginning, which was with God*, yea, *which was God?* For he is the only ſearcher of the heart, and trier of the reins.

Fourthly, By his mighty works. *The works which the Father hath given me to finiſh, the ſame works that I do bear witneſs of me, that the Father hath ſent me*, John v. 36. And when John ſent two of his diſciples to Jeſus with this queſtion: *Art thou he that ſhould come, or look we for another?* Chriſt bids them go, and tell John what things they had ſeen and heard; *how that the blind ſee, the lame walk, the lepers are cleanſed, the deaf hear, the dead are raiſed, to the poor the goſpel is preached; and bleſſed is he whoſoever ſhall not be offended in me*, Luke vii. 22, 23. *Why herein is a marvellous thing* (ſaid the blind man) *that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened my eyes*, John ix. 10. He who hath the power, and putteth forth the power inwardly; who openeth the inward eye, the inward ear, looſeth the inward tongue, cauſeth the inward feet to walk in the way of life, and the inward hands to work the works of God; he is the Meſſiah, the Saviour, the Word of life, the Son of the living God. They that believe in him, in his Spirit, in his power, in his inward appearance, have the witneſs in themſelves, the living teſtimony, which none can put out, or take away from them. He hath opened mine eyes, he hath opened my heart, he hath raiſed me out of the grave, he hath given me eternal life. He hath changed me inwardly, created me inwardly, by the working of his mighty power; and I daily live, and am preſerved, and grow by the ſame power. I feel his life, his virtue, his power, his preſence day by day. He is with me, he lives in me; and I live not of myſelf, but by feeling him to live in me, finding life ſpring up from him into me, and through me; and therein lies all my ability and ſtrength for evermore.

A few Words in the Bowels of tender Love and Good-will to my native Country.

It is written, *When thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world ſhall learn righteouſneſs.* Oh! that this might be verified concerning thee, O England! even that thou mighteſt learn righteouſneſs, and that the days of thy unrighteouſneſs might come to an end! Have not God's

judgments been upon thee? Yea, are not God's judgments ſtill upon thee? And can any thing divert them from coming more upon thee, but thy ſpeedy returning unto the Lord, in breaking off thy ſins by unfeigned repentance? Oh! that thou mighteſt be ſenſible of the hand of the Lord, and mighteſt hear the rod, and him who hath appointed it! The Lord hath power over all nations, and can break them in pieces as a potter's veſſel. They are but as the drop of a bucket, as the ſmall duſt of the balance; they are before him as nothing, and are counted to him leſs than nothing, and vanity.

Read *Iſai.* xxiv. ſee how God will plead with nations, and conſider whether he be not dealing thus with thee? Oh! hath not that been found in thee, and is not that found in thee, which provoketh the Lord exceedingly? Oh! that the weighty ſenſe of thy ſins were upon thee, and that thou mighteſt truly repent, and turn from them; that thou mighteſt reap the benefit of God's judgments, and learn righteouſneſs, and his indignation might be removed from thee, and his tender bowels of compaſſion move towards thee.

But perhaps ſome may ſay, *What is the righteouſneſs we ſhould learn?*

Anſw. Oh! learn to know God; that is a righteous thing. Learn to fear God; learn to worſhip him aright. How is that? Why in his own Spirit and truth, in which he ſeeks to be worſhipped. Learn humility towards God; learn juſtice and mercy towards men; learn to love thy enemies. If ye will be Chriſtians, that is the law of Chriſt; but that which is called the Chriſtian world, many of them have not yet learned ſo much as to love their friends: but hate and perſecute ſuch as fear the Lord, and ſeek their good, and ſtand in the gap to keep back the wrath of the Lord from breaking in upon them, and are wreſtling mightily with him, with ſtrong cries, that he would ſtay the ſharpneſs thereof, that it might not break forth to their deſtruction.

Learn to do to others as ye would be done to. Do not do to any, becauſe of their religion and tender conſciences towards the Lord, what ye would not have done to yourſelves becauſe of your religion. How long will it be ere ye learn this? How many judgments and diſtreſſes ſhall come upon you, before ye bow in ſpirit under the mighty hand of God, and yield yourſelves in ſubmiſſion to him, to learn theſe things of him?

Queſt. *But how ſhall we learn righteouſneſs?*

Anſw. Retire inwardly to that, and hearken inwardly to that, which gives the ſenſe of judgments, and learn of that; and that will wean you inwardly from all your unrighteouſneſs, and teach you righteouſneſs. There is that inwardly in the unregenerate which hardens and miſleads; there is alſo that inwardly which tenders, melts, teacheth, and leadeth aright, as it is believed in and obeyed.

Oh! that men knew the difference between theſe two, and how to turn from the one to the other! For out of the heart proceeds all that is evil and vain,

vain, and out of the heart are the iſſues of life alſo. The well or puddle of the muddy waters, of the waters of Egypt, of the wine of Sodom, and waters of Babylon, is there; and the well and ciſtern of the pure waters is there alſo.

Oh! my native country, that thou mighteſt be the firſt nation in this age of the world that might paſs through the judgments of God, and be cleanſed thereby, and be happy! Oh! that thy rulers and governors were weaned from the ſpirit and wiſdom of this world, and might receive of God's holy Spirit and wiſdom, and judge and govern themſelves and the people thereby! When the Jew outward was choſen to be the people of God, did not he pour out of his Spirit to govern them by? Were the judges, kings, and leaders thereof only anointed with outward oil? Were they not alſo anointed with God's Spirit? And can any Chriſtian magiſtrate govern aright any Chriſtian nation without the aſſiſtance and guidance of the ſame Spirit? And oh! that all the people were anointed alſo, that they might be inwardly kings and prieſts to the Lord, and the kingdom of Chriſt might be inwardly ſet up in all their hearts, and every man might reign, in and through him, over the enemies of his own ſoul! Oh! that the power and glory of the Lord might cover thy governors and inhabitants, O England! Oh! the prayers that have been long put up in bowels of tenderneſs for thee! Oh! the beſom of the Lord, the beſom of his righteous judgments, that it might ſweep the hearts of men inwardly, that this nation might be prepared for the glory of the Lord (for the glory which he reveals in his heavenly birth) to break forth outwardly, to the admiration and magnifying of the work of his power in the eyes of all beholders! *Amen, Amen.*

THE
FLESH and BLOOD
OF
CHRIST,

In the MYSTERY and in the OUTWARD,

Briefly, plainly, and uprightly Acknowledged, and Teſtified to;

For the Satisfaction and Benefit of the TENDER-HEARTED,

WHO

Deſire to Experience the Quickening, Healing, and Cleanſing VIRTUE of it.

WITH

A BRIEF ACCOUNT concerning the People called QUAKERS, in reference both to Principle and Doctrine.

Whereunto are added,

Some few other Things, which, by the Bleſſing of GOD, may be experimentally found uſeful to the true Pilgrims and faithful Travellers out of the Nature and Spirit of this World.

Written in true Love and Tenderneſs of Spirit by

ISAAC PENINGTON.

And without controverſy great is the myſtery of godlineſs. God was manifeſt in the fleſh, juſtified in the Spirit, ſeen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory, 1 TIM. iii. 16.

Of whom are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the fleſh Chriſt came, who is over all, God bleſſed for ever. Amen. ROM. ix. 5.

THE

PREFACE.

HAVING been lately at London, upon occaſion of a meeting between ſome of the people called QUAKERS, and ſome of the people called ANABAPTISTS, and other confederates, wherein I was ſomewhat concerned, being charged or brought in by Thomas Hicks, in his ſecond book of Dialogues, called *Continuation*, p. 4. to prove, that the QUAKERS account the blood of Chriſt no more than a common thing; and having been at that meeting to clear my innocency in that particular; but the thing not then coming in queſtion, and I being to return to my habitation in the country (though I ſtaid alſo a ſecond meeting for that purpoſe); it was on my heart, in the clearneſs and innocency thereof, to give forth this teſtimony, to take off that untruth and calumny of T. H. both from the People called QUAKERS, and myſelf; being both of us greatly therein injured, as the Lord God of heaven and earth knoweth. I have had experience of that deſpiſed people for many years, and I have often heard them (even the antient ones of them) own Chriſt both inwardly and outwardly. Yea, I heard one of the antients of them thus teſtify, in a publick meeting many years ſince, That if Chriſt had not come in the fleſh, in the fullneſs of time, to bear our ſins in his own body on the tree, and to offer himſelf up a ſacrifice for mankind, all mankind had utterly periſhed.

What cauſe then have we to praiſe the Lord God, for ſending his Son in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh, and for what his Son did therein! O profeſſors! do not pervert our words (by reading them with a prejudiced mind) quite contrary to the drift of God's Spirit by us! If ye ſhould thus read the holy ſcriptures, yea, the very words of Chriſt himſelf therein, and give that wiſdom of yours which fights againſt us ſcope to comment upon them, and perverts them after this manner, what a ſtrange and hideous appearance of untruth and contradiction to the very ſcriptures of the Old Teſtament might ye make of that wonderful appearance of God? For the

words

words of Chriſt ſeemed ſo fooliſh and impoſſible to the wiſe men of that age, that they frequently contradicted, and ſometimes derided him.

If we be not of God, we ſhall come to nought; nay, we had not ſtood to this day, if his mighty power had not upheld us. We could not have ſtood inwardly, nor could we have ſtood outwardly, againſt the fierce aſſaults we have met with both ways. And as we have not had by-ends to move us inwardly, ſo neither have we had by-ends to move us outwardly, as our God knoweth.

Oh! T. H. doſt thou believe the eternal judgment at the great day, not outwardly only in notion, but inwardly in heart? Oh! then conſider how wilt thou anſwer it to God, for ſaying ſo many things in the name of a people, as their belief and words, which never were ſpoken by any one of them, nor ever came into any one of their hearts! Innocency in me, life in me, truth in me, the Chriſtian ſpirit and nature in me, is a witneſs againſt thee, that thou wroteſt thy dialogues out of the Chriſtian nature and Spirit; and thy brethren, William Kiffin and the reſt, who have ſtood by thee to juſtify thee (or at leaſt ſeemed ſo to do) muſt take notice of theſe things, and condemn them in thee, or they will expoſe themſelves (and their religion) to the righteous judgment of God, and of all who love truth, and hate forgery and deceit.

I pity thee; yea, I can truly ſay, I forgive thee the injury thou haſt done me (though indeed it is very great, thus to repreſent me publickly; what thou couldſt not have done, if thou hadſt equally conſidered the things written in that book); and I alſo deſire that thou mayeſt be ſenſible of what thou haſt ſo evilly done, and confeſs it before God, that he alſo might forgive thee. Oh! I would not bear the weight of this ſin at the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt for ten thouſand worlds! And that theſe books ſhould be ſo long publick, and thy brethren take no notice of them, but rather at laſt apply themſelves to juſtify thee, oh! how will they anſwer this thing, when they come to anſwer it for ever! Oh! why will ye ſet up an intereſt againſt our Lord Chriſt (who is the truth, and teacheth truth) and bend all your ſtrength and underſtanding to make lies, falſhoods, and forgeries to appear as if they were truth, and not forgeries?

If ye will judge yourſelves, and repent of theſe things, ye ſhall not be condemned of the Lord; but if ye will go on, to cover and hide this great iniquity, ye ſhall not proſper therein.

As for my particular, I had committed my cauſe to the Lord, and intended to have been wholly ſilent, knowing my innocency will be cleared by him in this particular at the great day, and the love, truth, and uprightneſs wherein I wrote theſe things owned by him.

But in the love of God, and in the ſtillneſs and tenderneſs of my ſpirit, I was moved by him to write what follows. And oh! that it would pleaſe the Lord to make it ſerviceable even to T. H. himſelf, for his good.

THE

FLESH and BLOOD of CHRIST, &c.

IN the ſecond part of Thomas Hicks's *Dialogues* called *Continuation*, p. 4. he maketh his perſonated Quaker ſpeak thus: *Thou ſayeſt, we account the blood of Chriſt no more than a common thing; yea, no more than the blood of a common thief.* To which he makes his perſonated Chriſtian anſwer thus: *Iſaac Penington (who I ſuppoſe is an approved Quaker) aſks this queſtion; Can outward blood cleanſe? Therefore, ſaith he, we muſt enquire, whether it was the blood of the veil, that is, of the human nature, or the blood within the veil,* viz. *of that ſpiritual man, conſiſting of fleſh, blood, and bones, which took on him the veil, or human nature. It is not the blood of the veil; that is but outward; and can outward blood cleanſe?*

Now to ſatisfy any that deſire to underſtand the truth as it is, and to know what the intent of my heart and words (as ſpoken by me) was, I ſhall firſt ſay ſomewhat to his ſtating the queſtion, and then open my heart nakedly and plainly, as it then was, and ſtill is, in this matter.

Firſt, I anſwer, theſe were not my words, which he hath ſet down as mine; but words of his own patching up, partly out of ſeveral queries of mine, and partly out of his own conceivings upon my queries, as if he intended to make me appear both ridiculous and wicked at once. For I no where ſay, or affirm, or did ever believe, that Chriſt is a ſpiritual man, conſiſting of fleſh, blood, and bones, which took on him the veil of human nature. Thus he repreſents me as ridiculous. It is true, Chriſt inwardly, or as to his inward being, was a Spirit, or God bleſſed for ever, manifeſted in fleſh; which (to ſpeak properly) cannot have fleſh, blood, and bones, as man hath. And then, beſides his alterations at the beginning, putting in only four words of my query, and leaving out that which next follows (which might have manifeſted my drift and intent in them) he puts in an affirmation which was not mine, in theſe his own words: *It is not the blood of the veil; that is but outward*; and then annexeth to this affirmation of his own, the words of my former query, *Can outward blood cleanſe?* As if theſe words of mine *(Can outward blood cleanſe?)* did neceſſarily infer that the blood of Chriſt is but a common thing.

Herein he repreſents me wicked, and makes me ſpeak, by his changing and adding, that which never was in my heart, and the contrary whereto I have ſeveral times affirmed in that very book where thoſe ſeveral queries were put (out of which he forms this his own query, giving it forth in my name). For in the 10th page of that book, beginning at line 3. I poſitively affirm thus: that *Chriſt did offer up the fleſh and blood of that body* (though not only ſo, for he poured out his ſoul, he poured out his life) a ſacrifice or offering for ſin, *a ſacrifice unto the Father, and in it taſted death for every man; and that it is upon conſideration (and through God's acceptance of this ſacrifice for ſin) that the ſins of believers are pardoned, that God might be juſt, and the juſtifier of him who believeth in Jeſus, or who is of the faith of Jeſus.* Is this common fleſh and blood? Can this be affirmed of common fleſh and blood? Ought not he to have conſidered this, and other paſſages in my book of the ſame tendency, and not thus have reproached me, and miſrepreſented me to the world? Is this a Chriſtian ſpirit; or according to the law or prophets, or Chriſt's doctrine? Doth he herein do as he would be done by? Oh! that he had a heart to conſider it! I might alſo except againſt thoſe words: *human nature* (which he twice putteth in) being not my words, nor indeed my ſenſe; for by human nature, as I judge, is underſtood more than the body: whereas I, by the word veil, intended no more than the fleſh (or outward body), which in ſcripture is expreſsly ſo called, *Heb.* x. 20. *through the veil, that is to ſay, his fleſh.*

Secondly, I cannot but take notice of this, that he hath not cited the place, page, or pages; nay, not ſo much as named the book, where thoſe words or ſayings which he attributeth to me are written; whereby any perſons that are not willing to take things upon bare report (eſpecially in ſo deep charges, reflecting not only upon one perſon, but a whole people), might conſult the place, and ſee whether they were my words or no; and whether the queries I did put (indeed to the hearts of people) had any ſuch drift or no, and might compare the words (if they were mine) both with what went before, and alſo followed after; and with what was ſaid in ſeveral other places of the book, which ſpeak of Chriſt's fleſh and blood as of no common thing, but as that which God makes uſe of toward the redemption of mankind.

Thirdly, The drift of all thoſe queries in that book was not to vilify the fleſh and blood of Chriſt, by repreſenting it as a common or uſeleſs thing, but to bring people from ſticking in the outward, to a ſenſe of the inward myſtery; without which inward ſenſe and feeling, the magnifying and crying up the outward doth not avail. Indeed, at that time, I was in a great exerciſe concerning profeſſors: love was deeply working in my heart; and I was in a very tender frame of ſpirit towards them, as any may perceive, who, in the fear of God and in meekneſs of ſpirit, ſhall read that book (it is intituled, *A queſtion to the profeſſors of chriſtianity, whether they have the true, living, powerful, ſaving knowledge of Chriſt, or no*, &c.) And in this

tender frame, in the midſt of my crying to God for them, thoſe queries, from a true ſenſe and underſtanding, ſprang up in my heart, even to neceſſitate them, if poſſible, to ſome ſenſe of the myſtery, which there is an abſolute neceſſity of unto true chriſtianity and ſalvation. This was the very intent of my heart in the ſeveral queries, which generally ſpeak of one and the ſame thing, under ſeveral metaphors and figures. And that this was my intent, theſe words following, in the ſecond page of my preface to that book, do plainly expreſs; the words are theſe: *Now to draw mens minds to a ſenſe of truth, to a ſenſe of that which is the thing, that they might know the bread indeed, that they might know the living waters, come to them and drink thereof, and find Chriſt in them a well of water ſpringing up to eternal life; therefore was it in my heart to give forth this queſtion and the enſuing queries, which he that rightly anſwers, muſt know the thing; and he that doth not know the thing, by his inability to anſwer, may find that he doth not, and ſo may wait upon God, that he may receive the knowledge of it, and come to it, for the eternal life which it freely giveth.*

And that I did mean the myſtery, when I ſpake of bread, water, the wine, the live coal from the altar, the leaves of the tree of life, the putting on Chriſt, the fleſh and blood of Chriſt, *&c.* is very plain to him that reads ſingly. But to make it manifeſt, particularly concerning the fleſh and blood of Chriſt, I ſhall recite one query; it is the 33d query, page 29. The query is thus: *Is not the true church fleſh of Chriſt's fleſh, and bone of his bone? Is not the falſe or antichriſtian church fleſh of Antichriſt's fleſh, and bone of Antichriſt's bone? What is the fleſh of the ſpiritual whore, which is to be ſtripped naked and burnt with fire? Shall ever the church, which is of Chriſt's fleſh, be ſtripped naked and burnt with fire? Nay, doth not his fleſh make able to abide the devouring fire, and to dwell with the everlaſting burnings?* Can this poſſibly be underſtood of outward fleſh and bone? Is it not manifeſtly intended of fleſh and bone in the myſtery? Yea, that it did relate to the myſtery, in that very query, out of which he takes the four firſt words, and no more, is very manifeſt by the following words of the ſame query. It is the 17th query, page 25. The query runs thus: *Can outward blood cleanſe the conſcience? Ye that are ſpiritual, conſider; can outward water waſh the ſoul clean? Ye that have ever felt the blood of ſprinkling from the Lord upon your conſciences, and your conſciences cleanſed thereby, did ye ever feel it to be outward? It is one thing what a man apprehends (in the way of notion) from the letter concerning the things of God, and another thing what a man feels in Spirit.* Is it not manifeſt, by the expreſs words themſelves, that I ſpake of the inward feeling of the blood in the myſtery?

Fourthly, This query, *Can outward blood cleanſe the conſcience*, &c. doth not neceſſarily, nor indeed at all infer, that the blood of Chriſt, as to the outward, was but a common thing, or uſeleſs. If I had been to anſwer this query myſelf, he doth not know what my anſwer would have been. It was put to the profeſſors to anſwer inwardly in their hearts, who I did believe,

upon

upon ſerious conſideration, could not but confeſs, in way of anſwer thereto, that outward blood itſelf (or of itſelf) could not cleanſe and purge away the filth that was inward; but that muſt be done by that which is inward, living, and ſpiritual. Then hereby they had been brought to ſee the neceſſity of the myſtery, the Spirit, the power, the life of the Son, to be inwardly revealed in them; and then I had obtained my end. Nor was I their enemy in deſiring or aiming at this for them, or in ſetting queries before them, which to my eye (as in the ſight of God) ſeemed proper and conducible in themſelves (however they might fail as to them) towards the obtaining of this end. And if they could once come to this, to own the fleſh and blood in the myſtery, and ſo come to partake of its cleanſing and nouriſhing virtue, and not fix and appropriate that to the outward which chiefly belongs to the myſtery; I ſay, if they could but go thus far with me, in owning the inward life and power in the ſenſible feeling and operation thereof, I could meet them a great way in ſpeaking glorious things of, and attributing a cleanſing or waſhing virtue to the outward, in, and through, and with the inward. For I do not ſeparate the inward and outward in my own mind; but the Lord opened my heart, and taught me thus to diſtinguiſh, according to the ſcriptures, in love to them, and for their ſakes. For that was not my intent to deny the outward, or make it appear as a common or uſeleſs thing. There was never ſuch a ſenſe in my heart, nor was ever word written or ſpoken by me to that end; which, to make more manifeſt, I ſhall now plainly open my heart, how it hath been, and is ſtill with me in this reſpect, ſince it pleaſed the Lord and Father of mercies to reveal the myſtery of himſelf and of his Son in me.

In the firſt place, I freely confeſs, that I do own and acknowledge, as in God's ſight, OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, HIS FLESH AND BLOOD IN THE MYSTERY. The apoſtle Paul ſpeaks of the myſtery of God, and of the Father, and of Chriſt, *Coloſſ.* ii. 2. The Son was revealed in him, *Gal.* i. 16. and ſo he knew the myſtery of Chriſt, and preached the myſtery of Chriſt, *Coloſſ.* iv. 3. He was made an able miniſter of the new covenant, not of the letter, but of the Spirit or myſtery; and ſo he preached the wiſdom of God in the myſtery or Spirit, 1 *Cor.* ii. 7. 2 *Cor.* iii. 6. *Coloſſ.* i. 25, 26, 27. and he had great conflict to bring people to the rich knowledge and acknowledgment of the myſtery, *chap.* ii. 1, 2. He was ſent to turn men from darkneſs, and from the power of Satan (which is a myſtery, and works in mens hearts in a myſtery) to the light, to the Spirit and power of God, which is a myſtery alſo; and remiſſion of ſins is received in and through this myſtery, *Acts* xxvi. 18. And I deſire every ſerious and tender heart to conſider, whether this knowledge of Chriſt in the myſtery, was not that which he called the excellency of the knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt his Lord, *Phil.* iii. 8. Certain I am, that the knowledge of God and Chriſt in the myſtery, is the moſt excellent knowledge, and no leſs than life eternal, inwardly revealed and felt from God in the heart. And here no legal righteouſneſs,

teouſneſs, no ſelf-righteouſneſs can ſtand; but the virtue and power of Chriſt's death and reſurrection, inwardly revealed and felt in the myſtery, ſubdues and deſtroys it all. Indeed ſelf-righteouſneſs may be given up in the way of notion, or ſeemingly deſtroyed as to mens apprehenſions, without the revealing or working of the myſtery; but it cannot be deſtroyed in reality but where this is felt: but where the myſtery is known, is received, and throughly works, ſelf-righteouſneſs can have no place there. Now the apoſtle, who was acquainted with the myſtery of Chriſt, he ſpeaks of his body, fleſh, and bones, in the myſtery, *Eph.* v. 30. (and if there be fleſh and bones in the myſtery, is there not alſo blood in the myſtery?) yea, the apoſtle John ſpeaks of the Spirit, water, and blood, 1 *John* v. 8. Now conſider ſeriouſly, are all theſe of one and the ſame nature? or are they of a different nature? the Spirit of one nature, and the water and blood of another nature? Bleſſed be the Lord, the birth which is born of the Spirit, and is ſpiritual, knoweth the nature of the Spirit which begat it, and knoweth water which is inward and heavenly, and blood which is not at all of an inferior nature to it: and Jeſus Chriſt, our Lord and teacher, ſpeaketh of fleſh which came down from heaven, which fleſh is the bread of life, which he that lives, feeds upon, and none can feed upon but they that live. And by this it is manifeſt (to all to whom God hath given underſtanding in the myſtery) that his fleſh and blood in the myſtery is intended by him, in that he ſaith, *He that eateth my fleſh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me and I in him*, John vi. 56. This dwelling in each other is an effect of the myſtery, and is witneſſed by none that know not the myſtery. And to this effect Chriſt himſelf expreſsly expoundeth it, *ver.* 63. *It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the fleſh profiteth nothing: the words that I ſpeak to you, they are Spirit, and they are life.* As if he had ſaid, I am ſpeaking of the ſoul's food; I am ſpeaking of the heavenly bread; I am ſpeaking of Spirit and life; I am ſpeaking of the myſtery, which ye look upon and underſtand as outwardly intended by me, and ſo miſs of the myſtery of the Spirit, wherein is the quickening virtue, and look only at the outward body or fleſh, which, without the Spirit, profiteth not, nor ever can profit man.

Secondly, I confeſs further, that I have the ſenſe, experience, and knowledge of this alſo, that in the myſtery is the quickening virtue, the cleanſing virtue, the nouriſhing virtue, unto life eternal. The Spirit, the water, the blood inwardly ſprinkled, inwardly poured by God upon the ſoul, inwardly felt and drunk in by the thirſty earth, do cleanſe, do feed, do nouriſh, do refreſh. Doth not God promiſe to ſprinkle clean water upon his Iſrael in the new covenant, and they ſhall be clean? and to pour water on him that is thirſty, and floods upon the dry grounds? Is it not by the ſpirit of judgment and burning, that God waſheth away the filth of the daughter of Sion, *&c. Iſai.* iv. 4. Doth not the live coal from the altar purify and take away the iniquity? *Iſai.* vi. Oh! read inwardly! Oh! wait to be taught of God to read inwardly, that ye may know what theſe things mean!

Why

Why ſhould ye quarrel at the precious and tender openings of truth, in love to your ſouls?

Thirdly, I have likewiſe this ſenſe, and have alſo had this knowledge and experience, that the outward without this cannot avail. A man is not cleanſed by notions or apprehenſions concerning the thing, but by the thing itſelf. Let a man believe what he can concerning the blood of Chriſt, and apply to himſelf what promiſes he can, yet this will not do (Oh! how grievouſly do men miſtake herein!) but he muſt feel ſomewhat from God, ſomewhat of the new creation in Chriſt Jeſus, ſomewhat of his light (ſhining from him the Son into the heart, ſomewhat of his life, ſomewhat of his power, working againſt the darkneſs and power of the enemy in him. Now a man being turned to this, joined to this, gathered to this ſtandard of the Lord, tranſlated in ſome degree out of himſelf into this: here ſomewhat of the myſtery is revealed, and found working in him; and ſo far he is of God, and hath ſome true underſtanding from him. And here alſo he hath right to Chriſt's fleſh and blood in the outward, and to all the benefits and precious effects that come thereby. For by owning the myſtery, and receiving the myſtery, we are not taught of God to deny any thing of the outward fleſh and blood, or of his obedience and ſufferings in the fleſh, but rather are taught and enabled there rightly to underſtand it, and to reap the benefits and precious fruits of it.

Fourthly, The Lord hath ſhewn me this alſo, very manifeſtly and clearly, that in former times (in this nation as well as elſewhere) before profeſſors ran ſo into heaps (I mean, into ſeveral ways and forms of church-fellowſhip ſo called) they had more inward ſenſe of the myſtery than now they have; and were a great deal more tender (both unto the Lord, and one towards another) than now they are. For then grace in the heart, and the inward feeling, was the thing that was moſt minded among the ſtricter ſort. They did not mind ſo much bare reading, or hearing, or praying, or any outward obſervation whatſoever, as what they felt therein. Let men have ſpoken ever ſo many glorious words concerning the things of God; yet, if they had not been ſpoken warmly and freſhly by him that ſpoke them, there was little ſatisfaction to the ſoul that hungered after that which was living, but rather an inward grief and diſſatisfaction felt: ſo that in that day there was an inward ſenſe of the myſtery (though not a diſtinct knowledge of it) which was precious in the eye of God, and very ſavoury inwardly in the heart. But now, in ſo long time, by looking ſo much outward, and beating their brains, and diſputing about the outward, many have very much (if not wholly) loſt the ſenſe of the inward, and are found contending for the outward, againſt the very appearance and manifeſtation of the inward; and ſo are in danger of being hardened and ſealed up in that which is dead and literal, out of the limits of that which is living and ſpiritual. It is a dreadful thing to fight againſt the living God, and his living appear-

ance

ance in the hearts of thoſe whom he chuſeth, in any age or generation. The Lord hath been pleaſed to bring us (a poor deſpiſed remnant) back to that which firſt gave us life, in the days of our former profeſſion. Oh! that ye were brought thither alſo, that that might remove the veil, hardneſs, darkneſs, and deep prejudices from you; which can never be removed while ye ſtick in literal apprehenſions, without the light and teachings of God's Spirit! Now as touching the outward, which ye ſay we deny, becauſe of our teſtimony to the inward, I have frequently given a moſt ſolemn teſtimony thereto; and God knoweth it to be the truth of my heart; and that the teſtifying to the inward (from which the outward came) doth not make the outward void, but rather eſtabliſh it in its place and ſervice. God himſelf, who knew what virtue was in the inward, yet hath pleaſed to make uſe of the outward; and who may contradict or ſlight his wiſdom and counſel therein? Glorious was the appearance and manifeſtation of his Son in fleſh; precious his ſubjection and holy obedience to his Father; his giving himſelf up to death for ſinners was of great eſteem in his eye! It was a ſpotleſs ſacrifice of great value, and effectual for the remiſſion of ſins: and I do acknowledge humbly unto the Lord the remiſſion of my ſins thereby, and bleſs the Lord for it; even for giving up his Son to death for us all, and giving all that believe in his name and power to partake of remiſſion through him.

And ſeeing it is thus with me: ſeeing the root of the matter is in me, Oh! how can any man, that hopes to be redeemed by my Lord and Saviour, reproach me for ſpeaking of the myſtery, without the leaſt derogation to the outward, or what was done by him in the outward! But if I ſhould ſpeak vehemently concerning mens neglecting the myſtery, and ſetting up that which is outward inſtead of it and without it, I ſhould not be condemned, but juſtified of the Lord in ſo doing. Indeed there is a great and weighty charge from God's Spirit upon the profeſſors of this age, for departing from the inward (I mean that ſweet ſenſe, which, in ſome meaſure, God gave them in former times of the inward) and magnifying and ſtriving to eſtabliſh that which they apprehend concerning the outward, without it, and againſt it. Oh! that it were otherwiſe with them, that God may not have this charge to manage againſt them, when at the great day they are to appear before him, and be judged by him! When all that have ſlighted or ſpoken contemptuouſly of his Son's appearance in fleſh, and have not come to a ſenſe thereof, and repentance for it, ſhall be condemned; and they that have ſlighted or ſpoken contemptuouſly of his appearance in Spirit, ſhall not be juſtified: which appearance is now made manifeſt in the hearts of many, bleſſed be the Lord for it! Oh! what cries have been in my heart many years concerning you, O ye profeſſors of all ſorts who have had any tenderneſs towards the Lord! that ye might ſee and know the Lord Chriſt; and confeſs him in Spirit, in the myſtery, even in his inward appearance in the

the heart, and might feel his redeeming power and virtue there, and ſo be brought into union and fellowſhip with him!

The CONCLUSION of the FIRST PART.

THERE is a precious promiſe of God's making a feaſt of fat things on his holy mountain, and of deſtroying there the face of the covering, caſt over all people, and the veil that is ſpread over all nations, *Iſaiah* xxv. 6, 7. Now, what is this mountain? Was there not a Mount Sion under the law, which was figurative? and is there not a Mount Sion under the goſpel, which is the ſubſtance of that figure? and did not the chriſtians in the apoſtles days, who were called of God and ſanctified, come to this Mount Sion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jeruſalem, where they had fellowſhip with God the judge of all, and with Jeſus the mediator of the new covenant, *&c.*? *Heb.* xii. 22, 24. And was not the veil here done away in him who was their Lord, their light, their life, their ſtrength, their ſun of righteouſneſs, their bright and morning-ſtar? ſo that with open face they could behold the glory of the Lord, and were changed thereby into his heavenly image, from glory to glory, 2 *Cor.* iii. 18.

But alas! how hath that life, Spirit, and power been loſt, ſince the days of the apoſtles! Men have ſtill owned the apoſtles words, and formed many notions and apprehenſions out of the letter, but loſt the apoſtles Spirit, loſt the knowledge of the holy mountain, where the veil is taken away, and where the feaſt of fat things is made; and ſo are only dreaming about eating and drinking ſpiritually, but know not what it is to feed on the living ſubſtance. And ſo (being ignorant of that) the veil is over their hearts while they read the prophets words, and Chriſt's and his apoſtles words; and the myſtery of life, and of the redeeming power, is hid from their eyes: and that which God intended to them for a table, is become their ſnare (as it was with the Jews); and their back is ſo bowed down under the loads and burthens of the enemy, that they cannot ſo much as hope or believe in the power of life for redemption therefrom, but conclude it muſt neceſſarily be ſo with them all their days.

Oh! where's the faith that gives victory over the enemies? Where's the ability in the faith, ſo to reſiſt him as to make him fly? Where's Satan's falling like lightening (Oh! his ſtrength before the power of the Lord is but a flaſh!) and the God of peace his treading him under the feet of his ſaints? Oh! where's that truth, or that knowledge of the Son, which makes free from him? (*John* viii. 32, 36.) Where's that Spirit wherein liberty from his power and ſnares is felt? 2 *Cor.* iii. 17. Where's living in the

Spirit, and walking in the Spirit, and in the pure light of the Lord, where he cannot come? Where's reading of the ſcriptures in that which gives to witneſs them, and which fulfils them in the heart?

Oh! the myſtery of godlineſs, the power of godlineſs, where the life is revealed, and the veil taken away, and an underſtanding given, opened, and kept open, to read and underſtand the ſcriptures aright; yea, and the hidden glory alſo! Where it cannot be ſaid in truth to thoſe that are there, Ye know not the ſcriptures, nor the power of God; but ye have received power to become ſons of God, and ye are in him that is true; who truly opens the ſcriptures in your hearts, and gives you the enjoyment, inheritance, and poſſeſſion of the precious promiſes, whereby ye are made partakers of the divine nature, and live in him who is the head and ſpring of that nature. Oh! that people that profeſs Chriſt were here! Oh! that they did know him who begets! and then they would not be ſo ignorant of thoſe that are begotten by him; but would come into the true faith, into the true love, into the true knowledge and obedience of him, whom God hath appointed to guide and govern, and build up the whole living body. The Lord guide me inwardly thither, where the myſtery is revealed, and the fellowſhip with God, and his Son and ſaints, held in the myſtery! For our fellowſhip is not in a notional knowledge concerning Chriſt, but in the life itſelf; which the Lord God gather his people more and more into, and build them more and more up in. *Amen.*

A BRIEF

A BRIEF ACCOUNT CONCERNING The PEOPLE called QUAKERS, IN Reference both to PRINCIPLE and DOCTRINE.

We are a People of GOD's gathering, who (many of us) had long waited for his Appearance, and had undergone great Diſtreſs for want thereof.

Queſt. *BUT ſome may ſay, What appearance of the great God and Saviour did ye want?*

Anſw. We wanted the preſence and power of his Spirit to be inwardly manifeſted in our ſpirits. We had (as I may ſay) what we could gather from the letter, and endeavoured to practiſe what we could read in the letter; but we wanted the power from on high, we wanted life, we wanted the preſence and fellowſhip of our beloved; we wanted the knowledge of the heavenly ſeed and kingdom, and an entrance into it, and the holy dominion and reign of the Lord of life over the fleſh, over ſin and death in us.

Queſt. *How did God appear to you?*

Anſw. The Sun of righteouſneſs did ariſe in us, the day-ſpring from on high, the morning-ſtar did viſit us, inſomuch that we did as really ſee and feel the light and brightneſs of the inward day in our ſpirits, as ever we felt the darkneſs of the inward night.

Queſt. *How did God gather you?*

Anſw. By the voice of his Son, by the arm of his Son, by the virtue of his Son's light and life inwardly revealed and working in our hearts. This looſed us inwardly from the darkneſs, from the bonds of ſin and iniquity, from the power of the captiver and deſtroyer, and turned our minds inwardly towards our Lord and Saviour, to mind his inward appearance, his

inward ſhinings, his inward quickenings; all which were freſh from God, and full of virtue. And as we came to be ſenſible of them, join to them, receive and give up to them, we came to partake of their virtue, and to witneſs the reſcuing and redeeming of our ſouls thereby. So that by hearing the Son's voice, and following him, we came to find him the way to the Father, and to be gathered home by him to the Father's houſe, where is bread enough, and manſions of reſt and peace for all the children of the Moſt High.

Now as touching the bleſſed principle of truth, which we have had experience of, and teſtify to (for how can we conceal ſo rich a treaſure, and be faithful to God, or bear true good-will to men!) it is no new thing in itſelf, though of late more clearly revealed, and the minds of men more clearly directed and guided to it, than in former ages. It is no other than that which Chriſt himſelf abundantly preached, who preached the kingdom, who preached the truth which makes free, and that under many parables and reſemblances; ſometimes of a little ſeed, ſometimes of a pearl or hid treaſure, ſometimes of a leaven or ſalt, ſometimes of a loſt piece of ſilver, *&c.* Now what is this, and where is this to be found? What is this which is like a little ſeed, a pearl, *&c.* and where is it to be found? What is the field? Is it not the world, and is not the world ſet in man's heart? What is the houſe which is to be ſwept, and the candle lighted in? Is it not that houſe, or heart, where the many enemies are? A man's enemies, ſaith Chriſt, are thoſe of his own houſe. Indeed the teſtimony concerning this was precious to us; but the finding and experiencing the thing teſtified of to be according to the teſtimony, was much more. And this we ſay in perfect truth of heart, and in moſt tender love to the ſouls of people, that whoever tries, ſhall find this little thing, this little ſeed of the kingdom, to be a kingdom, to be a pearl, to be heavenly treaſure, to be the leaven of life, leavening the heart with life, and with the moſt precious oil and ointment of healing and ſalvation. So that we teſtify to no new thing, but to the truth and grace which was from the beginning; which was always in Jeſus Chriſt, our Lord and Saviour, and diſpenſed by him in all ages and generations, whereby he quickened, renewed, and changed the heart of the true believers in his inward and ſpiritual appearance in them, thereby deſtroying the enemies of his own houſe, and ſaving them from them. For indeed there is no ſaving the creature, without deſtroying that in the creature, which brings ſpiritual death and deſtruction upon it. Iſrael of old was ſaved by the deſtroying of their outward enemies; and Iſrael now (the new Iſrael, the inward Iſrael) is ſaved by the deſtruction of their inward enemies. Oh! that people could come out of their own wiſdom, and wait for God's wiſdom, that in it they might come to ſee the glory, the excellency, the exceeding rich virtue and treaſures of life, that are wrapped up in this principle or ſeed of life; and ſo might receive it, give up to it, and come to partake thereof.

And

And as touching doctrines, we have no new doctrines to hold forth. The doctrines held forth in the holy ſcriptures are the doctrines that we believe. And this doth farther ſeal to us our belief of this principle, becauſe we find it a key by which God openeth the ſcriptures to us, and giveth us the living ſenſe and evidence of them in our hearts. We ſee and have felt in it to whom the curſe and wrath belongs; and to whom the love, mercy, peace, bleſſings, and precious promiſes belong; and have been led by God's Holy Spirit and power through the judgments to the mercy, and to the partaking of the precious promiſes. So that what ſhould we publiſh any new faith, or any new doctrines for? Indeed we have none to publiſh; but all our aim is to bring men to the ancient principle of truth, and to the right underſtanding and practice of the ancient apoſtolick doctrine and holy faith once delivered to the ſaints. Head-notions do but cauſe diſputes; but heart-knowledge, heart-experience, ſenſe of the living power of God inwardly, the evidence and demonſtration of his Spirit in the inward parts, puts an end to diſputes, and puts men upon the inward travel and exerciſe of ſpirit by that which is new and living, which avails with God. Now whereas many are offended at us, becauſe we do not more preach doctrinal points, or the hiſtory of Chriſt, as touching his death, reſurrection, aſcenſion, *&c.*; but our declaration and teſtimony is chiefly concerning a principle to direct and guide mens minds thereto; to give a plain account of this thing, as it pleaſeth the Lord to open my heart at this time in love and good-will to ſatisfy and remove prejudices where it may be; thus it is in brief,

Firſt, That which God hath given us the experience of (after our great loſs in the literal knowledge of things) and that which he hath given us to teſtify of, is the myſtery, the hidden life, the inward and ſpiritual appearance of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, revealing his power inwardly, deſtroying enemies inwardly, and working his work inwardly in the heart. Oh! this was the joyful ſound to our ſouls, even the tidings of the ariſing of that inward life and power which could do this! Now this ſpiritual appearance of his was after his appearance in the fleſh, and is the ſtanding and laſting diſpenſation of the goſpel, even the appearance of Chriſt in his Spirit and power inwardly in the hearts of his. So that in minding this, and being faithful in this reſpect, we mind our peculiar work, and are faithful in that which God hath peculiarly called us to, and requireth of us.

Secondly, There is not that need of publiſhing the other as formerly was. The hiſtorical relation concerning Chriſt is generally believed and received by all ſorts that pretend to Chriſtianity. His death, his miracles, his riſing, his aſcending, his interceding, *&c.* is generally believed by all people; but the myſtery they miſs of, the hidden life they are not acquainted with, but alienated from the life of God, in the midſt of their literal owning and acknowledging of theſe things.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, The knowledge of theſe, without the knowledge of the myſtery, is not ſufficient to bring them unto God; for many ſet up that which they gather and comprehend from the relation concerning the thing, inſtead of the thing itſelf, and ſo never come to a ſenſe of their need of the thing itſelf, nay, not ſo far as rightly to ſeek after it. And ſo many are builders, and many are built up very high in religion, in a way of notion and practice, without acquaintance with the rock of ages, without the true knowledge and underſtanding of the foundation and corner-ſtone. My meaning is, they have a notion of Chriſt to be the rock, a notion of him to be the foundation-ſtone; but never come livingly to feel him the rock, to feel him the foundation-ſtone, inwardly laid in their hearts, and themſelves made living ſtones in him, and built upon him, the main and fundamental ſtone. Where is this to be felt but within? And they that feel this within, do they not feel Chriſt within? And can any that feel him within, deny him to be within the ſtrength of life, the hope of glory? Well, it is true once again (ſpiritually now, as well as formerly literally) *the ſtone which the builders refuſed* (Chriſt within, the builders of this age refuſe) *is become the head of the corner*, who knits together his ſanctified body, his living body, the church, in this our day, more gloriouſly than in the former ages and generations, bleſſed be the name of our God.

Fourthly, The myſtery, the hidden life, the appearance of Chriſt in Spirit, comprehends the other: and the other is not loſt or denied, but found in it, and there diſcerned or acknowledged more clearly and abundantly. It was to be after it, and comprehends that which went before it. Paul did not loſe any thing of the excellent knowledge of Chriſt, when he ſaid, *Henceforth know we no man after the fleſh; yea, though we have known Chriſt after the fleſh, yet henceforth know we him no more.* If he did not know Chriſt after the fleſh, how did he know him? Why as the Father inwardly revealed him. He knew him in his Spirit and power. He knew his death inwardly, he knew his reſurrection inwardly, he knew the Spirit, the virtue, the power of it inwardly; he knew the thing in the myſtery in his own heart. Oh! precious knowledge! Oh! the excellency of this knowledge of my Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt! What is the outwardly moſt exact literal knowledge without this? But what then? Do I now deny or ſlight the outward? No; I have it here, and I have the inward feeling of the Spirit of life, how it dwelt in him, how it wrought in him, and of what wonderful value all his actions and obedience were, in and through the virtue of this Spirit. Was Abraham's offering his ſon ſo precious in God's eye? Oh! then what is this! Never was ſuch a body ſo ſanctified, ſo prepared; never ſuch a ſacrifice offered. Oh! the infinite worth and value of it! For by the inward life and teachings of God's Spirit am I taught and made able to value that glorious outward appearance and manifeſtation of the life and power of God in that heavenly fleſh (as in my heart I have often called it) for the life ſo to dwell in it, that it was even one with it. Yet

ſtill

ſtill it was a veil, and the myſtery was the thing; and the eye of life looks through the veil into the myſtery, and paſſes through it, as I may ſay, as to the outward, that it may behold its glory in the inward. And here the fleſh of Chriſt, the veil, is not loſt, but is found and known in its glory in the inward. Be not offended at me, O tender-hearted reader! for I write in love things true, according to the inward feeling and demonſtration of God's Spirit, though not eaſy perhaps to be underſtood at preſent by thee; but in due time the Lord can make them manifeſt to thee, if thou in uprightneſs and tenderneſs of heart, and in the ſilence of the fleſhly part, wait upon him.

A few WORDS concerning the WAY of PEACE.

The way of peace they have not known, Rom. iii. 17.

THERE is a way of peace, of true peace with God, who is an adverſary to all that is unholy and unrighteous. Thoſe who have been unholy and unrighteous, who have been awakened, troubled, and could find no reſt, but the ſevere and righteous judgments and wrath of the Lord lying upon their ſpirits night and day, having at length had their ears opened by him, and being led by him out of the unholy and unrighteous way, into the holy and righteous way, have felt both life and peace therein.

Now there are two ſorts which the apoſtle here mentions (or two ſtates, which the apoſtle here ſpeaks of) which have not known, nor can know, the way of peace with God, who is an adverſary to them both, and will one day ſpeak trouble to them both, when their ſouls and conſciences come to be ſearched and judged by him.

The one is the profane, or Gentile ſtate, which is without the ſenſe of God, not heeding any appearance of his, or any inward voice of his Spirit, or the writing of his law upon their heart. Theſe never knew the way wherein the heart is inwardly and ſpiritually circumciſed and renewed, ſin forgiven, and peace obtained.

The other is the profeſſing or outward Jews ſtate, who may ſtudy the letter, and apply themſelves to conform outwardly to the letter, but never were acquainted with the inward Spirit and power. Theſe greatly differ from the Gentile or profane ſtate, both in outward appearance, and in their own eye; but are the ſame in the ground with the Gentiles, and know no more of the way of peace than the other do.

Queſt. *But what is the way of peace, which neither the profane, nor any ſort of profeſſors out of the life and power, ever knew, or can know?*

Anſw.

Anſw. It is an inward way, a way for the inward Jews, for the inwardly-renewed and circumciſed to walk in. It is an holy or ſanctified way, for the ſanctified-ones to walk in. It is a living way, which none but the living can find. It is a new way, which none but thoſe to whom God hath given the new eye can ſee. It is a way that God prepares and caſts up, and leads mens ſpirits into (who hearken unto him) and guides the feet of his ſaints in. It is a ſtrait and narrow way, which no luſt of the fleſh, nor wiſdom of the fleſh can find out, or enter into. Oh! how little, how low, how poor, how empty, how naked, muſt he be, that enters into this way, and walks therein! Many may ſeek after it, and may think to find it, and walk in it; but few ſhall be able, as our Lord Chriſt ſaid. Here circumciſion outward avails not; here want of that circumciſion hinders not; here bodily exerciſe profits little. The new creature is all here; the croſs of Chriſt is all here; the power of God is all here; and he that walks according to this rule, peace is upon him, and the whole Iſrael of God. But he that knows not this rule, nor walks according to this rule, peace is not upon him, nor is he one of the inward Iſrael of God, who receive power to become ſons, who receive the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus, which is the inward rule of the inward Iſrael.

This was the way of peace from the beginning; this is the way of peace ſtill; and there is not another. To be new created in Chriſt Jeſus, to be ingrafted into him, to abide in him, to have the circumciſion of the fleſh (the body of the ſins of the fleſh cut off) by the circumciſion of Chriſt (made inwardly in the heart without hands), and to walk not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit, even in the newneſs of the Spirit, here is life and peace, reſt and joy for evermore. The Lord of his tender mercy give me a ſenſe of it, and lead me into it more and more. *Amen.*

The CONCLUSION of the WHOLE.

THERE is a birth which is born, not of bloods, nor of the will of the fleſh, nor of the will of man; but of God, *John* i. 13. And this birth, which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit, *chap.* iii. 6. Now this birth, which is born of the Spirit, and is Spirit, hath a life and way of knowledge ſuitable to its nature and being; which is very far above man. Its life is in the Spirit, and its walking in the Spirit, and its knowledge is after the way of the Spirit, very far above man's way of conceiving or comprehending. The birth itſelf is a myſtery to man, and its way of knowing is a way altogether hid from man. It is indeed in the evidence and demonſtration of God's Spirit, in the ſhinings of his light in the heart: *In thy light ſhall we ſee light.* The birth knows what this means. There is a wiſe and prudent part in man, from which God hides the ſight of his kingdom, and the heavenly glory thereof; but there is a babe to which God reveals

reveals the myſtery thereof. Fleſh and blood cannot reveal; but the Father can and doth to his children, who is the teacher of them all, from the leaſt to the greateſt, in the new and living covenant. There is man's day, and there is God's day. There is man's day of gathering knowledge, after his fleſhly manner of comprehending; and there is God's day of giving knowledge, by the ſhinings of the light of his own eternal Spirit. In man's day, how doth wiſe and prudent man beat his brains, and labour in the fire for very vanity! But in God's day, how doth the knowledge of the Lord cover the earth, as the waters cover the ſea! When the day-ſpring from on high viſits inwardly, when the Lord lighteth the candle inwardly, oh! how clear is the knowledge of the Lord, and how doth it abound then! Oh! what a difference there is between man's apprehenſions and conceivings concerning Chriſt, and God's revealing him inwardly; and between man's coming to Chriſt, according to his own apprehenſions, and his coming to Chriſt in the heavenly drawings and teachings of the Father! *John* vi. 45. Oh! that the begettings of life and the birth thereof were felt in mens hearts, that in it men might know the day of God, and the kingdom of God, and the treaſures of wiſdom which are hid in Chriſt, and will ever be ſo, but as Chriſt is inwardly revealed and formed in the heart! Many may have notions of Chriſt being formed in them; ah! but to feel it inwardly! there is the ſweetneſs, there is the aſſurance, there is the life, there is the peace, there is the righteouſneſs of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and there is the joy of the true Chriſtian for ever. Come, oh! come, all ſorts of tender profeſſors, out of yourſelves, into God's Spirit, into God's truth, that ye may know what it is to be in the Spirit, and in the truth, and what it is to live there, and to know things there, and to worſhip there, and to have fellowſhip with the Father and Son there. The poor receive the goſpel, the poor receive the kingdom, the poor receive the power, the poor receive the righteouſneſs and ſalvation of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Ye are too rich in your comprehenſions and gathered knowledge from your own literal conceivings, to learn to wait aright, to receive of him his gold, his raiment, and his eye-ſalve. What pleaſure is it to us to teſtify againſt you? Were it not for obedience to our God, and love to your ſouls, we would never do it. We are content and ſatisfied to be of the little deſpiſed flock, which the ſhepherd feeds, giving to every one his proportion of daily nouriſhment, life, peace, righteouſneſs, and joy. It is our love to you that we would not have you lay out your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which will not ſatisfy the truly hungry and awakened ſoul, but might come to feed on ſubſtance, on the life itſelf, on the ſweetneſs and fatneſs of God's houſe, where nothing that any of his children can need or long after is wanting. Oh! that ye had the ſenſe of our love! If ye had the true underſtanding and ſenſe of God's love, ye could not but have a ſenſe of our love alſo; for it comes from him, and it flows towards you in his will and tender movings. Do ye love God? Are your hearts circumciſed to love

God? If not, ye do not truly love. And if ye loved him that begets, ye would love them that are begotten by him. Your love is to your own notions and apprehenſions of God, not to his nature; for if ye loved his nature (that holy, heavenly, ſpiritual nature as it is in him) ye could not but love it in his children alſo. Well, our God is love, and taught us to love even our enemies, and to wreſtle with our God for them, that, if it be poſſible, the Lord may remove the ſcales from their eyes, and give them repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth as it is in Jeſus, where it is more living and powerful, more effectual and operative (inwardly purifying, ſanctifying, yea, and juſtifying alſo) than any but thoſe only that are born of God (and kept alive by him), yet ever knew, or can know.

POSTSCRIPT.

Containing a few Words concerning the Doings and Sufferings of that deſpiſed People called QUAKERS, which are both miſunderſtood and miſrepreſented by many: With an Exhortation to true Chriſtianity.

FIRST, their doings are looked upon by many to be from a natural principle, and according to the covenant of works, and not from the free grace and gift of God's Spirit.

Now concerning this I can ſpeak ſomewhat faithfully, as having been long experienced in the principle, and as having had experience of the grace and tender mercy of the Lord from my childhood. And indeed thus it hath been with me from my childhood; whatever hath been done in me, or by me, that was good, I have felt to be from God's grace and mercy to me, and have cried grace, grace, mercy, mercy, to the Lord continually therefore. And when I was turned to his truth in the inward parts, I found it was God's grace and tender love to me to turn me to it, and to preſerve me, being turned; and to cauſe it to ſpring in me day by day, and to give me ability through it. Ah! none knows but they that have had experience how we have been weakened in the natural part; how poor we have been made, that we might receive the goſpel, and how poor in ourſelves we are kept, that we might enjoy the riches and inheritance of the kingdom. And this we daily experience, that not by the works of righteouſneſs which we had done, but according to his mercy, he ſaved us, and doth daily ſave us, by the waſhing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghoſt. Yea, God's writing his law in our hearts, and placing his fear there, and putting his Spirit within us, to enlighten and quicken, and cauſe us to walk in his ways, and to keep his ſtatutes and judgments, and do them, and all the mortifying of ſin, and denying of the luſts of the fleſh, and performing that

that which is holy and acceptable in the eyes of the Lord (as all that proceeds from his own Holy Spirit is) all that is of the new covenant, and performed by the working thereof, and not by the working of the natural part of itſelf, but by the working of the Spirit of life in the new-birth, and through the natural part as his inſtrument. So let none reproach the works that God brings forth in us, who hath created us anew in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works, leſt thereby he reproach the Holy Spirit and power of the living God, in which they are wrought, and by which they are brought forth, and could never be brought forth without it.

Then for our ſufferings, indeed they are gifts we received from God; ſo that we can truly ſay, it is given us by the Lord our God not only to believe in his Son, but to ſuffer for his ſake; and that it is only in good conſcience to God, and by the aſſiſtance of the Lord, that we ſuffer; that the patience and meekneſs wherewith we ſuffer, is not of ourſelves, but of him. Whenever the Lord permits afflictions or ſufferings to come upon us, our eye is to him, and we enter into them in his fear, knowing our own inability to go through them, and looking up to him for ſtrength. And when we are in them, while they continue, we daily look up to him for ſtrength, and have been many times very weak in ourſelves, when immediately, or very ſoon after, we have felt great ſtrength in the Lord. Alſo after our ſufferings, when the Lord hath been with us all along, and brought us through our ſufferings in the peace and joy of his Spirit, we do not look back boaſtingly, as if we had been any thing, or done any thing as of ourſelves; but we bow before the Lord, and bleſs the Lord, when we conſider how he hath been with us, and how he hath upheld us by the right-hand of his righteouſneſs; and what he hath done for us when we were very poor, weak, afflicted, and often ſorely diſtreſſed. Therefore let none reproach, miſrepreſent, or vilify our ſufferings, which our God hath helped us through, and for which we (in humility of heart) give him thanks, and cannot but do ſo all our days, becauſe the thankful remembrance and ſenſe of them is written by the finger of his Spirit upon our hearts. Oh! all ſorts of people, whom we love and travail for, and uſe our intereſt in the Lord our God for, that ye might be truly ſenſible of your conditions, know the inward appearance and viſits of the Shepherd and Saviour of the ſoul, turn to him (looking in true faith unto him) and be ſaved! I ſay unto you, in tenderneſs of ſpirit, oh! do not requite us ſo ill for our love and truth of heart towards you, as to caſt untrue and unjuſt reproaches upon us, and to render that truth vile which God hath made honourable, in ſanctifying and redeeming many thereby. Truly our love is from the God of love. We could not ſo love you as we do, if our God had not taught us; nor ſo ſeek after you as we do, in tenderneſs of bowels, if we were not inſtruments in the hand of the ſhepherd of Iſrael. And the light we teſtify of, which we feel ſhine in us, it is no leſs than the true ſure light of the ſun of righteouſneſs, which God hath cauſed to ſhine in our hearts; who alſo loveth mankind,

and cauſeth it to glance into the darkeſt corners of the earth. And the life we are quickened by out of ſin and tranſgreſſion, and the power we have received to become ſons of God, it is from him who is the fountain of life, and hath all power in heaven and earth. Oh! that ye could receive the bleſſed report! Oh! that the arm of the Lord might be revealed in you! Oh! that ye could feel and witneſs the Saviour working out your ſalvation in you, binding the ſtrong man in you, caſting him out of you, with all his goods after him, that the place of the wicked-one might be found no more in you, nor none of his luſts or vain thoughts lodge in your hearts any more; but ye might witneſs and experience the new heart, the clean heart, the pure heart, in which God dwells, and the eye that ſees him that is inviſible. Oh! glory to the Lord for what he hath done in and for a deſpiſed people (who were no people before the Lord made them one) who hath brought them to Sion, his holy mountain, where he dwells and reigns, and where he builds up his own houſe and temple, which he eſtabliſheth over all; where the ſheep of Iſrael feed, and where the Shepherd of Iſrael reigns and triumphs in glory over the enemies of his kingdom. The little innocent babes taſte ſomewhat of his holy dominion and power, and of his kingdom of peace and righteouſneſs; but in his antients his light ſhines very brightly, and before them he reigneth glorioufly; ſo that he is praiſed in the very heights of Sion, and his name renowned there over all for ever. Glory, glory to the pure ſpring of life, from whence the living ſtreams come which refreſh the ſouls of the living. Surely his pure praiſes ſhall be ſounded in the hearts of the living for ever and ever. *Amen.*

An EXHORTATION to true CHRISTIANITY.

It is eaſy to pretend to CHRIST; but to be a true Chriſtian is very precious, and many Tribulations and deep Afflictions are to be paſſed through before it be attained unto, as thoſe who are made ſo by the Lord experience.

NOW everlaſting happineſs and ſalvation depends upon true Chriſtianity. Not upon having the name of a Chriſtian only, or profeſſing ſuch or ſuch Chriſtian doctrines; but upon having the nature of Chriſtianity, upon being renewed by the Spirit of Chriſt, and receiving the Spirit, walking in the Spirit, and bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit. Oh! here is the Chriſtian indeed! and it ſhould be every one's care not to fall ſhort of this. Now becauſe there is a contention about Chriſtianity, who is the right Chriſtian, it behoves every man to take care as to himſelf that he be really ſuch;

ſuch; that he receive that from God, and be that to God, which none but the right Chriſtian can be, or can receive. This is the uſe I would make of theſe things in my own heart, even to be ſure I be ſuch an one as God hath made, and will accept and own as a Chriſtian. And having had ſome experience of this thing, and truly underſtanding what the Chriſtian ſtate is, and what doth attend it, I ſhall ſet down ſome few things, which he that inwardly knoweth, witneſſeth, and enjoyeth, is without all controverſy a true Chriſtian, whatever man may account of him.

Firſt, He that is a new creature, is without doubt a true Chriſtian. He that is regenerated, he that is renewed in the ſpirit of his mind by Chriſt Jeſus, he that is new-created in the holy and heavenly image, he has felt the power of God's Spirit begetting him anew, forming him anew, out of the old nature and image of the firſt Adam, into the nature and image of the ſecond Adam, who is the quickening Spirit; and that which is begotten and born of him is Spirit.

Secondly, He that is in the new covenant, is a true Chriſtian. He that hath thirſt after the living waters, and hath heard the call to the waters of life, hath heard the voice of him who gives life, and hath received life from him, who giveth life to all that come to him, and who maketh the new and everlaſting covenant with all that hear his voice, take up his croſs and follow him, he is without doubt one of Chriſt's ſheep, whom the ſhepherd owneth, and taketh care of.

Thirdly, He that is inwardly circumciſed with the circumciſion made without hands, he is a Jew inward, a Chriſtian inward (in the ſight of God) who hath felt the Spirit and power of Chriſt Jeſus, and rejoiceth in Chriſt Jeſus, and is one of thoſe worſhippers whom God hath ſought out and taught to worſhip him in the life and Spirit of his Son.

Fourthly, He that is inwardly waſhed with clean water, with the inward water, he is the inward Jew, the inward Chriſtian. God promiſed to pour out clean water upon his Iſrael, and they ſhould be clean. He who hath the clean water poured upon him inwardly, which inwardly waſheth and cleanſeth, he is without controverſy one of God's inward Iſrael.

Fifthly, He that feeds on the bread of life within, and drinks the water of life out of his own well or ciſtern, he without doubt is living. He that is invited to the marriage-ſupper of the Lamb, and comes and ſups with the Lamb, he is one of the ſame nature and Spirit with him. He with whom Chriſt ſups, who hath heard Chriſt knocking at his door, hath opened to him, and received him in, to purify his heart, and dwell in him, and ſup with him, and give him to ſup with himſelf; ſo that he eats bread in the kingdom, and drinks wine in the kingdom, and partakes of the feaſt of fat things, which God makes to his Iſrael in his holy mountain, he is without doubt one of Chriſt's, and partakes of this in and through him.

Sixthly, He that lives the Chriſtian life, who walks not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit; who doth not fulfil the luſts of the fleſh, but hath the

law

law of God written in his heart, and his fear put within him, and his Holy Spirit given to inſtruct him, and to guide him to anſwer the holy law written in his heart, which the carnal mind is not ſubject to, nor can be ſubject to, without doubt he is ſpiritual; without doubt he is a true Chriſtian.

Seventhly, He that lives by faith, who knows the faith which is the gift of God, hath received it, and lives by it; who can do nothing of himſelf, but only by faith in that holy power which doth all in him; ſo that he lives, and believes, and obeys from an holy root of life, which cauſeth life to ſpring up in him, and love to ſpring up in him, and the Lamb's meekneſs and patience to ſpring up in him, and all grace to ſpring up in him; I ſay, he that lives thus, without doubt is ingrafted into the true vine, into the true olive-tree; and the root bears him, and miniſters ſap unto him, and he is a true, freſh, green, living branch of the true vine, of the holy olive-tree.

Many more things might be mentioned, as they are experimentally known and felt amongſt us, who are true Chriſtians; though the Baptiſts and others have repreſented us to the world as if we were no Chriſtians: but that touching us not, their ſaying ſo is no more to us than the profeſſing Jews of the ſame ſpirit, who ſaid Chriſt had a devil. But theſe are to give a taſte; and he that knows and feels theſe, may alſo know and feel the reſt, if ever ſo many more ſhould be mentioned. Now the way to feel theſe, and to become a true Chriſtian (and to grow up in the Chriſtian life) is to feel the ſeed of the kingdom, which is the beginning of the kingdom, the beginning of true Chriſtianity; and then to feel the ſeed abiding (the ſeed which is of the Spirit, and which is Spirit), here is the conſtant ſeal of Chriſtianity in my heart; here are true and certain evidences, day by day, of the Chriſtian nature and ſpirit manifeſting themſelves undeniably inwardly.

And now having the witneſs in myſelf, the teſtimony of him that begat life in me, teſtifying to his own work, and to his own birth, of what value are any teſtimonies of men without, againſt this? Chriſtianity is a myſtery, and he only can truly ſee who is a Chriſtian indeed, who hath the inward eye opened, and with that inward eye is taught of God to pierce into that wherein Chriſtianity conſiſteth. There have been many Chriſtians of mens making; there are alſo ſome Chriſtians of God's and Chriſt's making; which Chriſtians God and Chriſt will own, but not the other. Oh! let men have a care, that when God cometh to diſtinguiſh between cattle and cattle (between Chriſtian and Chriſtian) they be found ſuch as God will make up as his jewels, and own as the ſheep of his fold; ſuch as ſhall be able to bear the trial of his ſearching judgment, and pure impartial eye; and not ſuch as ſtill, notwithſtanding all their profeſſion of religion and Chriſtianity, are found workers of iniquity, and ſo not created anew in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works, and therefore not truly of him, nor true Chriſtians in his eye.

TO THE

JEWS NATURAL,

AND TO THE

JEWS SPIRITUAL;

WITH A

FEW WORDS to ENGLAND, my native Country, &c.

Some ſenſible, weighty QUERIES, concerning ſome Things very ſweet and neceſſary to be experienced in the truly Chriſtian State.

Whereunto is added,

A POSTSCRIPT, containing ſome Queries on *Iſaiah* l. 10, 11. A Scripture of deep Counſel and Concern to the darkened and diſtreſſed States of ſome among thoſe that fear and obey the Lord.

Whereunto are added,

Two or three Queries touching the River and City of God, and the pure Stillneſs, wherein God is known and exalted.

AS ALSO,

Some QUESTIONS anſwered concerning the true Church, Miniſtry, and Maintenance under the Goſpel, and about the Lamb's War.

Written in travailing Bowels, by

ISAAC PENINGTON.

Truly God is good to Iſrael, to ſuch as are of a clean heart, PSAL. lxxiii. 1.

Behold an Iſraelite indeed, in whom is no guile, JOHN i. 47.

For he is not a Jew that is one outwardly; neither is that circumciſion which is outward in the fleſh: but he is a Jew which is one inwardly; and circumciſion is that of the heart, in the Spirit, and not in the letter; whoſe praiſe is not of men, but of God, ROM. ii. 28, 29.

Behold, the days come, ſaith the Lord, that I will puniſh all them which are circumciſed, with the uncircumciſed, Egypt, and Judah, and Edom, and the children of Ammon and Moab, and all that are in the utmoſt corners that dwell in the wilderneſs; for all theſe nations are uncircumciſed, and all the houſe of Iſrael are uncircumciſed in the heart, JER. ix. 25, 26.

THE

PREFACE.

WHAT a day of diſtreſs, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, is to come upon the wicked and ungodly world (even upon man, who was created in the image of God, but is now fallen from it, and found out of it, and in another image very unlike it); the eye which the god of this world hath blinded, and the heart which he hath hardened by ſin and tranſgreſſion, hath no ſenſe of.

What a day of diſtreſs and miſery ſome in this nation (and in other parts of the world) have already met with! how they have felt the weight of ſin upon their ſpirits, and what a ſore thing it hath been to them to feel their ſouls ſeparated from that God that made them (who is the Huſband and Father, King, and Preſerver of ſouls, that are found in his image and nature); how they have been inwardly captivated by a foreign power, and oppreſſed, and made to ſerve under ſin, and could hear no effectual tidings of his appearance who was able to ſave, but their ſpirits were ready to ſink, and their hope of redemption, from that which oppreſſed and captivated them, almoſt cut off; this being an inward ſtate and condition, hath been altogether hid from the eye which is outward.

How the Lord at length appeared unto theſe (his bowels having long rolled over them, and he having long waited to be gracious to them, even till the full and acceptable ſet time was come); how his light hath ſhined in and upon them; how he gathered thoſe dry bones together, and breathed life into them, and made them live: this alſo is altogether an hidden thing from the eye of the world.

How the Lord, who appeared to them, hath exerciſed and tried them; how he hath judged them, and how he hath ſaved them; what deſolations he hath made inwardly in them, and what he hath built there: what an hammer, a ſword, a fire, *&c.* his pure word of life hath been in them; how that birth which could live without God, without his inward life, or upon words and knowledge without life, hath been famiſhed, until, by the pain of the famine, its very life and breath hath been taken from it, and it crucified with Chriſt, by the pain of the croſs of Chriſt: and what birth hath been

been raiſed and crowned afterwards, and beautified with the ornaments of righteouſneſs and ſalvation; yea, with the endleſs love and mercy with its God; and how the Lord is with his people, and dwells and walks in them, and how he hath humbled them to walk with him; and how in fear and humility they do walk with him in the light of day everlaſting, even as God is Light, and walks in the light of his own day: theſe are very ſtrange and unknown things to the wiſeſt and moſt prudent in religion at this day, who are not gathered into the myſtery of godlineſs (nor into the Spirit, power, and glory of the Father) where theſe things are revealed in and by the Son.

What faith the children of wiſdom have in the wiſdom and power which hath appeared: what confidence they have in the Lord their God; that he will ſtand by them in all their exerciſes and trials, both inward and outward; and what experiences they have had of the Lord's ſtanding by them in both: how his faithfulneſs doth not fail; and how their faith in him is upheld and preſerved by him, that it doth not fail in the ſtormy time, or hour of greateſt diſtreſs; and how their eye is unto him, and their hearts with him in the calms; ſo that their God is all in all unto them continually: (and who knows this but they that have it!) Oh! who can utter or declare the ſweetneſs and certainty of this, where it is enjoyed!

What love alſo the Lord ſheds abroad in their hearts; and how he teacheth and cauſeth them to love, by often circumciſing their hearts, and cutting off that which hindereth the pure love from ſpringing in them; and how they love others, in the love wherewith God (who is Love) hath loved them; and how natural it is to them to pray for their enemies, and to bleſs them that curſe them, and do good for evil; but cannot requite evil for evil, being tranſplanted into, and growing up in, the root that is good; and ſends up good ſap and virtue into them, which nouriſheth all that is good in them, but is death and deſtruction to the remainders of evil, as the Lord purſueth and findeth it out: Oh! how impoſſible is it for the heart of man to conceive and underſtand!

Now I alſo having taſted of the mercy and goodneſs of the Lord, and having been brought out of a ſtate of great miſery and ſorrow of heart into the redemption and joy of God's choſen; and having found the Lord faithful to me, and giving me faith in the appearance of his Spirit and power in me, and true love (tender love) not only to my brethren in the truth, but to all mankind ſpringing in me, and divers fruits iſſuing forth from it; ſome of them at this time I cannot but publiſh, and the Lord open the hearts of thoſe whom it concerns, that they may find ſome help, benefit, and furtherance by it. For it is the joy of my heart to receive good from God; to be filled with his bleſſings, to have my cup overflow; and that others may be helped, refreſhed, and gladded therewith, and, by the ſweet taſte thereof, led to wait for the opening of the ſame root and fountain of life in themſelves, to yield living ſap, and ſend forth living ſtreams in them day by day.

TO THE JEWS NATURAL, AND TO THE JEWS SPIRITUAL.

Somewhat in the Love of GOD to the JEWS-NATURAL, or Seed of ABRAHAM after the Fleſh.

OH! the glory of your ſtate outward, who were the people whom God once choſe and loved, and manifeſted his power and preſence among, above all people! whoſe land was the glory of all lands, to which God brought you out of Egypt by an out-ſtretched arm, through a dreadful wilderneſs, wherein ye were tempted, tried, and exerciſed, and the ſucceeding generation fitted to enter into. Oh! what laws and ſtatutes, and righteous judgments, did God give you, ſuch as no nation beſides had! What a temple had ye to appear before God in, and the ark of the covenant, and holy prieſts, kings and prophets! and how nigh was God to you, to be enquired of by you; and how ready to hear your prayers, in all that you called upon him for! The eternal God was thy refuge, and underneath were the everlaſting arms (the Lord was thy rock, and thou waſt built upon him); and he did thruſt out the enemy before thee, and did ſay, Deſtroy. And when the arm of the Lord did deſtroy them before thee, thou didſt dwell in ſafety alone; and the Lord was a fountain of living waters to thee, and his heavens did drop down fatneſs upon thee. Happy waſt thou, O Iſrael! who was like unto thee, O people ſaved by the Lord! the ſhield of thy help, and who was the ſword of thy excellency! and thine enemies were found lyars unto thee, and thou didſt tread upon their high places. And it might have been ſtill ſo with thee, hadſt thou not been unmindful of the rock that begat thee, and forgotten God that formed thee. For thy glory ſhould not have been taken from thee, but ſwallowed up in a higher

higher glory, wherein thou mighteſt have had the firſt and chiefeſt ſhare, hadſt thou not, by thy almoſt conſtant rebellion and unbelief, provoked the Lord againſt thee; not only often to afflict, but at laſt utterly to caſt thee off from being a people, and to chuſe a people in thy ſtead, who ſhould bring forth better fruits to the Lord of the vineyard, than thou in thy day hadſt done.

Yet when thy ſtate was thus glorious, it was not a ſtate of the truly ſubſtantial, laſting glory, but a ſhadowy ſtate or repreſentative thereof. Thy day of glory was not the day of the Meſſiah, the day of everlaſting light inwardly, wherein the Lord alone is exalted inwardly in the hearts of all, in whom he breaks down all that is contrary to the light of his day. Thy day was but the day of the outward ſhadows of the heavenly ſubſtance; but when that day (the day of the inward ſubſtance and glory) ſhined, thy ſhadows or ſhadowy ſtate was to fly away, and to be ſwallowed up in the pure ſubſtance and ſpiritual kingdom of the Meſſiah.

Thy birth from Abraham after the fleſh, was not the birth which was to inherit the promiſe in the kingdom of the Meſſiah; but there is a birth inwardly born of the Spirit, born after Abraham in his faith, who travels inwardly, as Abraham did outwardly, and ſeeks an inward country and city, whoſe builder and maker is God: to theſe the ſpiritual kingdom and promiſes belong.

Thy circumciſion was but the circumciſion outward, the circumciſion of the fleſh; it was not the circumciſion of the heart: that is the circumciſion of the inward Jew, which indeed the ſcripture called for from you, becauſe there was ſomewhat near you, which would have ſo circumciſed you, had ye hearkened and given up to it. But ye, as a people, were not ſo circumciſed, but were a ſtiff-necked people (as Moſes and the prophets were ſtill complaining of you) uncircumciſed in heart and ears, reſiſting God's Spirit both in your own hearts and in the prophets, until the Lord was provoked to take away both viſion and prophet from you.

The Egypt in which your fathers were in bondage, and Pharaoh who oppreſſed them, was but the Egypt outward, and Pharaoh outward. There is an inward Egypt, wherein the ſpiritual ſeed, the inward man, the ſoul is in bondage; and there is a ſpiritual Pharaoh, that oppreſſeth the ſpiritual ſeed, in ſpiritual Egypt: and there is a ſtretching out the arm of the Almighty inwardly, to break the ſtrength of the inward Pharaoh, to pierce Leviathan the crooked ſerpent, and to deliver the ſoul from under his captivity.

The wilderneſs alſo your fathers were led through, was but the outward wilderneſs, where they were tempted and tried by the Lord many ways, that he might do them good in the latter end. But the inward Iſrael, after they are led out of the inward Egypt, are tried in the inward wilderneſs; where they are judged after the fleſh, and that waſted in them, which is not to enter into and inherit the good land, where they are tried in the furnace

of affliction, and their filth purged away by the ſpirit of judgment and burning; that the righteous nation, which hath received the holy inward law, and keeps the truth, may enter into the good land, city, and kingdom of the Meſſiah, and inherit the bleſſed promiſes of life and ſalvation there.

Moſes, your great prophet, was a type of the great, laſting, ſtanding prophet, whom God would raiſe up like unto Moſes, who was to give his inward law as Moſes did the outward, and to lead all the ſpiritual Iſrael as Moſes did the outward Iſrael; and his word was to be heard and ſtand in all things whatſoever he ſhall ſay unto his people: and whoſoever will not hear and obey this prophet, ſhall be cut off from among the holy, ſpiritual, and inwardly-living people.

Joſhua who ſucceeded Moſes, led but into the figurative reſt: he was but a figure of him that inwardly leads into the inward and ſpiritual reſt; which the true Jews, which are inwardly created and formed by God, and made a willing people, in the day of his power, enter into.

The pillar of cloud, and pillar of fire in the wilderneſs, were but figures of the ſpiritual pillar of cloud and fire, by which the ſpiritual Iſrael are led and defended in the glorious goſpel-day of God's Spirit and power. Read *Iſaiah*, ch. iv. which ſpeaketh of the goſpel-day, and the pillar and cloud of fire to be created therein, and of the defence which is to be on all the inward and ſpiritual glory.

The land of Canaan, the outward good and kingdom of Iſrael, was but a figure of the inward land, and kingdom of the inward Iſrael, in the days of the Meſſiah. This is the land of Judah in which the ſong is ſung, becauſe of the inward ſtrong city where God appoints ſalvation for walls and bulwarks, which the righteous nation which keepeth the truth, enter into, *Iſaiah* xxvi.

Their outward kings in that land, and particularly David, were but types of the ſpiritual king, the ſpiritual David, whom God will raiſe up to the ſpiritual people, who ſhould ſeek the Lord their God, and David their king; who ſhall be their ſpiritual ſhepherd and ruler, whom God hath appointed to feed them in the integrity of his heart, and to guide them by the ſkilfulneſs of his hands, who is King of righteouſneſs and peace inwardly, and who miniſters righteouſneſs and peace to the ſheep and lambs of his paſtures.

Their outward prieſts (even their high-prieſts) were but a repreſentation of the great high-prieſt of God, who was to be a prieſt for ever, after the order of Melchizedeck, *Pſal.* cx.

Their outward covenant (made with them from the outward mount Sinai, upon the giving of the law, and holy ſtatutes and ordinances, by which they were to live and enjoy God in their outward ſtate) was but a ſhadow of the inward and ſpiritual covenant, the new and everlaſting covenant, which God makes with his inward and ſpiritual people in the latter days.

Their

Their outward law, as written and engraven in tables of ſtone, was but a ſhadow of the inward law, which God puts into the children of the new covenant, inſomuch that they need not go outwardly to learn the knowledge of God, or his will or law; but the inward Iſrael find it inwardly written within. There the iſles who wait for the law of the Spirit of life, for the law of the Meſſiah, receive the miniſtration of the law (in the Spirit and power of the Meſſiah) which they wait for.

Their outward mount Sion, on which the outward temple was built by Solomon, that wiſe king, that righteous king, that peaceable king, was a figure of the inward mountain, whereupon the inward houſe is built in the days of the goſpel, in the days of the Meſſiah: and to this mountain are the ſpiritual people to come up and worſhip. And this is the Sion and Jeruſalem (even inward and ſpiritual) from which the law and word of the Lord go forth in the days of the Meſſiah: and the ſpiritual houſe of Jacob combine or agree together to walk in the light of the Lord, who ſends forth his light and truth, and leads them to his holy hill, and to his tabernacles.

Their outward tabernacle and temple, ſanctified by God for him to dwell and appear in, was a ſhadow of God's inward dwelling-place in man; *I will tabernacle in them.* God dwelleth not in houſes or temples made with hands; that is not the place of his reſt, as ſaith the prophet Iſaiah: but the high and lofty one that inhabits eternity, whoſe throne is in heaven, and the earth his footſtool, he dwelleth alſo with him that is of an humble and contrite ſpirit, to revive the ſpirit of the humble, and to revive the ſpirit of the contrite ones.

Their outward ſabbaths were not the laſting ſabbath or reſt of the goſpel, but given them for a ſign; but the day of redemption from ſin, the day of reſting from ſin, the day of ceaſing from the works of the fleſh, the day wherein God is all, and doth all by his Spirit and power inwardly, and wherein he alone is exalted: this is the day of reſt which the Lord hath made for the ſpiritual Iſrael, and which they are glad of and rejoice in.

So their incenſe and ſacrifices were not the laſting incenſe and ſacrifices, but ſhadows thereof. The prayers of the ſaints, when God pours out the ſpirit of prayer and ſupplication upon them, and they pray to him therein, that is the incenſe. *Let my prayer be directed before thee as incenſe, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening ſacrifice:* And this was the incenſe and pure offering, which in every place was to be offered up to God's name among the Gentiles, when his name ſhould be great among them, as Malachi foretells. And what ſaid David of old, when God's Spirit and the holy viſion was upon him? *Sacrifice and offering thou didſt not deſire; mine ears haſt thou opened: burnt-offering and ſin-offering haſt thou not required. Then ſaid I, lo I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me: I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is in the midſt of my bowels. The ſacrifices*

of

of God are a broken ſpirit (rent your hearts, and not your garments, and turn to the Lord your God); a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not deſpiſe. The offering praiſe to God from a ſincere heart, and the ordering of the converſation aright, theſe are the ſacrifices well-pleaſing to God; for ſacrifices were not the thing which God mainly required of outward Iſrael, but this, OBEY MY VOICE: and obedience is more acceptable than all other ſacrifices, and to hearken than the fat of the choiceſt rams.

Beſides, thoſe outward ſacrifices could not remove or take away ſin from the conſcience, but he that came to do the will, and to put an end to thoſe ſacrifices and oblations, which were but outward and imperfect; he doth both waſh and take away ſins from within, and alſo bring in everlaſting righteouſneſs, where his light ſhines, and his pure life ſprings inwardly in the heart.

And this is the ſubſtance of all the ſhadows, even the light eternal, the word eternal, the Son of the living God (who is Light as the Father is Light) the word nigh in the mouth and heart, the word of the new covenant; the which Moſes directed your fathers to, *Deut.* xxx. and by which the Lord ſpeaketh, and hath ſpoken throughout the world, *Pſal.* l. 1. and teacheth every man that hearkeneth to his voice, to do juſtly, love mercy, and walk humbly with his God, as it is expreſſed by the prophet Micah.

Now to you Jews, of the outward line of Abraham (whoſe return to the Lord my ſoul moſt earneſtly deſireth after, and for which I have moſt vehemently and wreſtlingly prayed to the Lord) are ſome few weighty queries upon my heart:

Query 1. How came David to pant ſo after the living God, like the hart or hind after the water-brooks? Was it not from the quickening virtue of this inward word, which Moſes the man of God had directed the mind to? Read *Pſal.* cxix. and ſee how he breathed for quickenings from this word, on which all depends. And if ye come to experience this word, and the quickening virtue of it, and follow the Lord on therein, ye will ſoon come to know the day of the Meſſiah, and the glory of his kingdom, which is not outward, tranſitory, and of a periſhing nature; but inward, ſpiritual, and everlaſting (as David well knew, and ſpake ſenſibly of, *Pſal.* cxlv. and elſewhere.)

Query 2. What are the waters which every thirſty ſoul is invited to? Are they not the waters of the Meſſiah? are they not waters that flow out of the wells of ſalvation? *Iſaiah* xii. Do not the ſpiritual Iſrael draw ſpiritual water out of the wells of the Saviour in the days of the Meſſiah? What is it to come to theſe waters? Oh! that ye experimentally knew! But this I will tell you, from true and certain experience, that if ye come to take notice of this word of life, which God hath placed nigh in your mouths and hearts, to ſeparate between the evil words and evil thoughts of the enemy's begetting and bringing forth, and the good words and good thoughts

thoughts of God's begetting and bringing forth, and incline your ear to it, and come from that which it reproves in you, and draws you from to itſelf; your ſouls ſhall ſoon come to live; and he that gives you life, will make an everlaſting covenant with you, even the ſure mercies of David: but ye muſt ſtill mind him as a witneſs, and leader, and commander, inwardly in your hearts, that ye may be preſerved in the covenant, and enjoy the bleſſings of it; ſee *Iſaiah* lv.

Query 3. Did not the Meſſiah come at the ſet time, at the time ſet by the Holy-Spirit of prophecy? Did he not come in the prepared body to do the will? and did he not do the will? And after his obedience to his Father, was he not cut off, though not for himſelf? And after his cutting off, were not ye made deſolate? why were ye made deſolate? why did ſuch a ſtroke come upon you as never before? Oh! conſider it! Read *Dan.* ix. 24. to the end of the chapter, and let him that readeth underſtand.

Query 4. What was that curſe, and on whom did it light? *Let their table become a ſnare to them*, &c. *Pſal.* lxix. Was it not on thoſe that gave gall and vinegar to the Meſſiah to drink, whom David was a figure of, and ſpake in Spirit concerning? Whoſe eyes are always darkened? Doth not the veil lie ſtill on your whole nation? Do ye know the inward mountain, where the veil or face of the covering is deſtroyed? in the inward day and light of the Meſſiah it is deſtroyed. There that which veils the noble eye of the mind is known, and alſo that which deſtroys and removeth it. To what purpoſe is it for you to read Moſes and the prophets, when the veil is ſo upon you, that ye cannot ſee what is to be aboliſhed, and is aboliſhed by the dawning of the glorious day of the Meſſiah, and what is to remain and never to be aboliſhed? There is a Jewſhip, there is a circumciſion, there is a ſabbath, there is a reſt, *&c.* for the inward and ſpiritual people, which is to remain and never to be aboliſhed.

Query 5. Who were thoſe that God would hide his face from, and ſee what their end ſhould be, becauſe they were a froward generation, children in whom was no faith? Who were they that moved God to jealouſy, and provoked him to anger? And what was the people and fooliſh nation he would provoke them to jealouſy and anger with? *Deut.* xxxii. Was it not the ſpiritual, the holy nation inwardly, the true Jews, whom God took from among the Gentiles, whom he appeared among, and was a God and a Father to, when he caſt off and forſook the Jews outward, and left them to be a deſolation?

Query 6. Who are thoſe that ſhall be hungry when God's ſervants ſhall eat? and thirſty, when God's ſervants ſhall drink? and aſhamed, when his ſervants ſhall rejoice? Are not your ſouls hungry and parched for want of the ſpiritual ſuſtenance, which the living God ſatisfieth his ſervants with, making a feaſt of fat things to them on his inward holy mountain? And are not ye aſhamed of your expectations of the Meſſiah, while the ſervants of the Lord rejoice in him, their Prince and Saviour, and witneſs him daily

a leader

a leader and commander to them? What is the people whom the Lord hath ſlain and made deſolate? (Are not ye a ſlain people to God, alienated from his life, Spirit, and power, dead in your literal notions and obſervations?) And what are the ſervants of the Lord, whom the Lord hath called by another name, even a name that ye never knew? ſee *Iſaiah* lxvi. And conſider, how all your day God ſpread out his hand to you, and ye were rebellious, and would not hear; and now night is come upon you, and your viſitation, as ſuch a people, is and hath been long ended.

Query 7. Did not God ſignify by the prophet Malachi, that he had no pleaſure in you, nor would accept an offering at your hand? And did not he alſo ſignify the chuſing of the Gentiles in your ſtead; that the called among the Gentiles ſhould be his people; and his name which ye had prophaned, ſhould be great among them, and their incenſe and pure offering in every place be accepted, even from the riſing of the Sun to the going down of the ſame? read *Mal.* chap. i.

Query 8. Now the inward people, and the inward covenant, the new covenant, are brought forth, ſhall ye ever be owned or regarded as an outward people, according to your outward covenant any more? Will not all ſuch expectations fail you for ever? Ye have looked, from generation to generation, for the coming and appearing of the Meſſiah outwardly, after an outward manner: but his coming and appearance is inward; and he ſetteth up his kingdom, his everlaſting kingdom in his ſaints, and in their hearts he ruleth inwardly; and the Meſſiah, the ſeed of the woman, bruiſeth the head of the ſerpent there. Oh! that ye knew the ſubſtance! Oh! that ye knew the word of life in the heart, and were turned to it, and daily faithful and obedient! that ye might feel it cruſhing and daſhing the power of ſin and corruption in your hearts! This is the conſolation, hope, and joy of the inward and ſpiritual Iſrael! Oh! that ye might be made partakers thereof; and that your long outward captivity and deſolation might at length end in inward freedom and redemption! *Amen.*

Somewhat of Concern to the JEWS Spiritual, who are of the Seed of ABRAHAM ſpiritually, or according to the Faith, and gathered in this Day of GOD's Power, to the true and everlaſting SHILOH.

THE ſcepter ſhall not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him ſhall the gathering of the people be, Gen. xlix. 10.

Old

Old Jacob, in the ſpirit of prophecy, ſaw that Judah was to have the ſcepter, the kingly power; and it was not to depart from him, it was to be his right, and the lawgiver was to be between his feet, till Shiloh came; then the right was Shiloh's to reign, and to give laws to his people, whom he ſhould gather out of the kingdom of darkneſs, and from Satan's power, into his own inward, ſpiritual, and everlaſting kingdom. This was the true king, God's king, whom he would ſet upon the holy hill of ſpiritual Sion; and all the holy, inward, ſpiritual gatherings of all people, ſcattered from the holy, living power, muſt be to him.

I will overturn, overturn, overturn it, and it ſhall be no more, until he come whoſe right it is, and I will give it him. And his dominion ſhall not paſs away, or the ſcepter and lawgiving power ſhall not paſs away from him, as it did from Judah, nor ſhall his kingdom ever be deſtroyed, *Dan.* vii. 14. but God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he ſhall reign over the houſe of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there ſhall be no end.

Query. *But who are the people that ſhall be gathered to him?*

Anſw. The people that ſhall hear his voice, and come at his call, that ſhall receive the inſtruction of wiſdom, and feel the drawing power and virtue of the Father, in the day of his power. It is written in the prophets, *All thy children ſhall be taught of the Lord.* And every one that is taught and learneth of the Father, cometh to the Son, cometh to the Meſſiah, cometh to the Shiloh, to the Word eternal, to the Word of life in the heart.

Query. *Was not the Meſſiah promiſed to the Jews, to come of them, and to be appropriated to them?*

Anſw. He was promiſed to them, and to come of them; but not to be appropriated to them: but he was to be the univerſal Saviour to all that ſhould come under his enſign and banner. *He ſhall ſet up an enſign for the nations, and he ſhall ſprinkle many nations,* &c. And God promiſed that he would give his Son (his elect choice ſervant) for a light to the Gentiles.

Query. *Were the Jews then excluded?*

Anſw. No; they were to be gathered to Shiloh, as well as others. Nay, the Lord had a ſpecial regard to them; the goſpel was firſt preached to them; they had the firſt offer, or the firſt call to the ſpiritual glory; they were the children of the prophets, and of the covenant of God made with their Fathers; unto whom God having raiſed up his Son Jeſus, ſent him to bleſs them, in turning away every one of them from their iniquities. And the whole nation, turning from their iniquities, ſhould have been gathered by him, and ſhould have enjoyed the bleſſing of his day and kingdom. Yea, the firſt gathering was from among them, and the firſt glorious goſpel church was at Jeruſalem, where the Spirit and power of the Lord Jeſus did moſt eminently and wonderfully break forth, and great grace was upon them all. But the nation was not gathered to Shiloh, nor did come under his ſcepter and government; but only a remnant of the nation. So theſe being

ing gathered, the reſt were caſt off; and the enſign was carried among the Gentiles, and the great gathering was there among them.

Query. *How is it manifeſt that the great gathering to Shiloh was to be from among the Gentiles?*

Anſw. By many expreſs prophecies of Scripture, and promiſes to the Meſſiah, that he ſhould have the Gentiles for his inheritance and poſſeſſion. When God eſtabliſhed his king, the Meſſiah, upon the holy hill of ſpiritual Sion, notwithſtanding all the heathen's rage againſt him, and the people of the Jews imagining a vain thing (thinking to keep the body of him in the grave, who was the reſurrection and the life) what ſaith the Lord to him? *Aſk of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermoſt parts of the earth for thy poſſeſſion*, Pſ. ii. The Lord ſaid, in another place, *It is a light thing that thou mayeſt be my ſervant, to raiſe up the tribes of Jacob, and to reſtore the preſerved of Iſrael; I will alſo give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayeſt be my ſalvation unto the ends of the earth*, Iſai. xlix. 6. Again the Lord ſaith further, *From the riſing of the ſun, even unto the going down of the ſame, my name ſhall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incenſe ſhall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering; for my name ſhall be great among the heathen, ſaith the Lord of hoſts*, Mal. i. 11. *Sing, O barren! thou that didſt not bear; break forth into ſinging, and cry aloud, thou that didſt not travail with child; for more are the children of the deſolate than the children of the married wife, ſaith the Lord*, Iſai. liv. 1. Who was the married wife? Who was the mother in the days of the firſt covenant? Was it not the Jeruſalem below, who was then deſolate and barren? Was it not another Jeruſalem, which is free, and the mother of all the ſpiritual children? Why was ſhe now to rejoice and ſing? But becauſe ſhe was to break forth on the right hand and on the left, and her ſeed was to inherit the Gentiles, and make the deſolate cities to be inhabited, *ver.* 3. The covenant of Mount Sinai did bring forth a great people, whereof Jeruſalem, that was below, was the mother. The covenant afterwards made, beſides that in Horeb, whereof the Word nigh in the heart and mouth is the foundation (by which Word God circumciſeth) was as yet barren, and did not bring forth a people to the Lord. But this covenant was to have a time; the Jeruſalem above was to have a time, wherein her ſeed ſhould inherit the Gentiles; and the Maker, the Huſband, ſhould be called the God of the whole earth, *ver.* 5. Read *Gal.* iv. and ſee how the apoſtle of the Gentiles expounds the myſtery, ſhewing which is the free woman, and her free children, and which is the bond woman, and which the bond children, who are caſt out in the day of God, and in the ſhining of his heavenly light inwardly, and cannot inherit the glorious kingdom of the goſpel, with the children of the free woman. And conſider who were the people in the time of the firſt covenant? Who obtained mercy then? Were they not the Jews? And who were not a people, and who did not obtain mercy, but were left out of the love and mercy of the firſt covenant?

Were

Were they not the Gentiles? And did not the Lord promiſe that he would have mercy on them that had not obtained mercy? And that he would ſay to them that were not his people, THOU ART MY PEOPLE; and they ſhall ſay, MY GOD, *Hoſ.* ii. 23. compared with *Rom.* ix. 26. Was not this once gloriouſly fulfilled in the firſt viſitation of the Gentiles? And is it not again gloriouſly fulfilled in his now viſiting them again with the freſh ſound of the everlaſting goſpel, as was promiſed, *Rev.* xiv. 7.

Oh! what a promiſe is that concerning the day of God! that *in that day there ſhall be a root of Jeſſe, which ſhall ſtand for an enſign of the people; to it ſhall the Gentiles ſeek, and his reſt ſhall be glorious*, Iſai. xi. 10. Is not *this the day* wherein the holy mountain is known, and that nothing can hurt or deſtroy there? And doth not the knowledge of the Lord cover his land, his earth, as the waters do the ſea? And doth not the root of Jeſſe, the rock of life and ſalvation, ſtand for an enſign, placed ſo by God; and who can diſplace it, or ſhake them that are built on the inward Mount Sion? Yea, is not the reſt of the weary ſoul, when he comes hither, found to be very glorious? And when this enſign is more fully lifted up, ſhall not the Gentiles more abundantly come unto God from the ends of the earth, and bewail their dead and eſtranged eſtate from God? (ſaying, *Surely our fathers inherited vanity, and things wherein is no profit*, Jer. xvi. 19.) And ſhall they not turn from all their idols to ſerve the living God? *Theſſ.* i. 9. And concerning the Meſſiah it was promiſed, that in his name ſhould the Gentiles truſt, and the iſles ſhould wait for his law, and he ſhould bring forth judgment to the Gentiles, *Iſai.* xli. 11. with *Matt.* xii. 21.

But what ſhould I mention any more ſcriptures unto you concerning this thing, when-as ye have ſo large, full, certain, and daily experience of it in that which is pure and living of God, which never deceived nor can deceive any; for ye are begotten by his Spirit into his own image and nature, and have received the Spirit of adoption, wherein ye cry Abba Father to the Father of ſpirits. He found you indeed in a ſtrange land, under great captivity, and alienation from him. Ye have been in Egypt, in Sodom, in Babylon ſpiritually; but the mercy of the Lord hath followed you thither, and the arm of the Lord hath reached to you there, and hath cut Rahab, and wounded the Dragon: yea, he whom the Lord hath given for a light to the Gentiles, hath ſhined to you there, in the midſt of your darkneſs. So that God ſent among you the prophet like unto Moſes (tho' far above Moſes) and hearing him, he led you out of Egypt, and by the rod of his power did ſigns, and wonders, and valiant acts there, breaking that power which with a ſtrong hand held you captive there, and oppreſſed you. And you have known the travel, trials, and temptations in the ſpiritual wilderneſs, and the falling of the carcaſes which were to fall there, and the holy leading by the pillar of cloud and fire through all the entanglements and dangers therein. Yea, and the faithful among you, the tried and prepared among you, have paſſed over Jordan (the river of pure

judgment) into the good land, and come to witneſs David and Solomon (who are one in Spirit) your king, who rules in righteouſneſs, and miniſters to you peace everlaſting. And ye have an high-prieſt there, not after the order of Aaron, but after the order of Melchizedeck, who is made the everlaſting high-prieſt of God; not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endleſs life; whoſe lips preſerve the knowledge of the law for you, in that endleſs power of life; who miniſters for you, and to you, in the endleſs power, and intercedes with power and efficacy, and ſprinkles the blood of the covenant upon you, which takes away ſin from your hearts and conſciences. So that ye know the inward Jew's ſtate, the inward Holy Land and kingdom, the inward circumciſion, before ye enter into that land; and the inward Lamb, the inward paſſover, the inward Mount Sion, and Jeruſalem; the inward ſacrifices and incenſe, the inward tabernacle, temple, and ark of the covenant, the inward ſhew-bread, the inward manna, the inward rod that buddeth, the inward candleſtick and the lamps, which are never to go out in God's temple. And what ſhould I ſay more? All that that people were to be outwardly, in an outward way and ſtate, hath God made inwardly in the ſubſtance; and what God would have been to them outwardly, had they obeyed his voice, and kept his ſtatutes and judgments, that he is to you inwardly, who are the called and choſen, and faithful followers of the Lamb; and ye are the enjoyers of their bleſſings and promiſes inwardly. Oh! the glory of your ſtate to the eye that is opened to ſee it!

Now ſomewhat doth remain on my heart unto you.

Oh! be daily ſenſible of the tender goodneſs and mercy of the Lord, which is broke forth among you! What mercy, what love hath the Father ſhewn unto you, that ye ſhould be thus accounted the children of God! That they which were once nigh, ſhould be removed ſo far off; and ye which were ſo far off, ſhould be brought ſo nigh, and ſhould for ever inherit the ſure mercies of David! For of a truth the Lord will never forſake you; but his mercy endures for ever towards you, and your ſtakes ſhall never be removed; but this inward building ſhall ſtand for ever. This Sion is the place of God's reſt, where he will dwell for ever; whereof the outward Sion was but a figure.

Secondly, Remember what the Lord promiſed himſelf concerning you. When he was weary of that people, and continually complaining of them, oh! what did he promiſe himſelf concerning the people he would bring forth by the Spirit and power of the Meſſiah in the latter days! Did he not promiſe himſelf that they ſhould be an holy people, an inwardly circumciſed people, a people that ſhould pleaſe him; ſheep that ſhould hear the ſhepherd's voice, and be healed by him, gathered home to him, and ſo follow and learn of him the ſhepherd; that they ſhould all know him from the leaſt to the greateſt; and that he would forgive their ſins, and heal their backſlidings, and they ſhould not return to folly, or backſlide

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any more, as the children after the fleſh always did? Is not this the people whom indeed God hath formed for himſelf, who ſhall ſhew forth his praiſe.

Thirdly, Remember what a covenant God hath prepared to make with you, as ye incline your ears to him, and are led by him into the holy agreement with him; even a covenant which is not weak, as the old covenant was; but is full of virtue and vigour, to enable you to do whatever God requires of you. Mark what it contains, putting God's fear into you: not the fear which is taught by man's precepts, which man may get into his carnal mind; but which God places as the treaſury of life in the heart; as it is written, *The fear of the Lord and his treaſure*, Iſai. xxxvi. 6. And oh! who knows the precioufneſs of his treaſure! How it cleanſeth the heart, and keepeth it clean, and will not ſuffer the mind that is ſeaſoned with it, and kept to it, to depart from the living God! It fenceth from unbelief, it fenceth from diſobedience; it will not ſuffer the ſoul ſo much as to meddle with any appearance of evil. Oh! precious, glorious, bleſſed treaſure! happy is the man that feareth always with this fear! Another precious thing this covenant contains, is the law written in the heart, that it ſhall be as near, yea, nearer than ſin is, in the heart that is made tender, and hath the law of the Spirit of life written in it. Who knows what it is to have the law of love, the law of life, the law of the Spirit, the law of faith, the law of new obedience, livingly written by God in his heart! Surely none can but they in whom God writes it! And ſuch cannot but deſire to have it written in their hearts by his bleſſed finger daily more and more. But this covenant contains yet more, even the putting of his own Spirit within them, to be a fountain of life there, a fountain of ſtrength and wiſdom there, to make them more and more willing in the day of his power, and to cauſe them to walk in his ways, and keep his ſtatutes and judgments, and do them, that the Lord their God may bleſs them, and delight in them.

Oh! who would not long after, and take up the croſs and ſhame, to enjoy the glory of this ſtate! Oh! what hath God done for a poor deſpiſed remnant among the Gentiles! Oh! who would not deſire to keep this bleſſed covenant with the Lord; that he might fully enjoy the Lord, that the marriage with the Maker might be witneſſed in his loving-kindneſs and everlaſting righteouſneſs, and all unrighteouſneſs and uncleanneſs might be put away, removed, and ſeparated from the heart for ever. Ah! the virgin ſpirit which the Lamb loves, and delights to marry with! *He that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit*, and he muſt part with all that is old, evil, unclean, and corrupt in him, that would be joined to the Lord, and become one Spirit with him. Oh! who would loſe the precious fear of the covenant, which is clean, and endureth for ever, and keepeth clean and chaſte to the Lord for ever! And who would miſs of one law which God hath to write in the hearts of his children, when every law is a law of life,

life, and changeth the mind into the nature of the law-giver! And who would grieve God's Spirit, which is our Comforter? Or quench that which kindles the pure flame of love and life in our hearts? Much leſs can any of his dear and tender children be willing to vex him, by manifeſt careleſſneſs and diſobedience, who giveth us to drink of the river of his pleaſure!

Oh! my dear friends, ye do not know the great travail of my heart, that all the children of the Lord might walk before him in all well-pleaſing, that we might come all into covenant, into the full covenant, and walk fully with him in the covenant, that his anger might be for ever turned away from us all, and he might never be wroth with, nor rebuke any of us any more. It is written on my heart the breaking forth of this glory would reach the Jews: and though they be caſt off as to their outward ſtate, and not ſo to be owned, or come into that glory any more; yet there is a day of mercy and love for them, as to that inward ſtate of life and redemption, which their outward ſtate typified: and the breaking forth of the full glory of the Gentiles, and the manifeſtation of God's mighty power and preſence with them (they being made by God a people to him, and ſo walking with God, as none poſſibly can but thoſe who are created anew, and ſo made by him), this might provoke the Jews (the poor, ſcattered, forſaken Jews) to ſeek after the Lord their God, and David their king, inwardly to be revealed in them, and rule among them.

The Lord God of our life and tender mercies, carry on to perfection this bleſſed work of his, which he hath ſo mightily begun, and ſo mightily hitherto carried on; and keep us in the ſenſe of his good Spirit, and in tender and holy ſubjection thereto, and in unity together in the life, wherein we have been gathered and preſerved, and in pure judgment over all the workings of the enemy every-where, and in the goſpel love one to another, and to all men, even our greateſt enemies, that we may ſeek the good of all men, even the reſcuing and preſerving all out of ſin and wrath, as much as in us is poſſible; that the pure light wherewith our God and heavenly Father hath enlightened us, may ſhine in us; and the life wherewith he hath quickened us, may live in us, and we may feed on nothing but life, and grow in nothing but life and truth, to the great glory of our heavenly Father, and to the great joy of our hearts. *Amen.*

A few

A few Words to ENGLAND, my Native Country.

Oh! Land of my Nativity! Oh! my dear Countrymen!

THE pure power of the Lord is upon me, and the ſprings of life open in me; and among many other things, I am melted in love and deſires after your welfare. And this is in my heart to ſay to you: if I now teſtify to you in truth of a pearl, a heavenly pearl, an everlaſting pearl, will ye not hear me? If I tell you your heart is the field, or earth, wherein it is hid, will ye not conſider of it? If the everlaſting goſpel be preached again, which contains true tidings of redemption from ſin, will ye not liſten after it? If the kingdom of God, and righteouſneſs of Chriſt, be to be revealed within, would ye not willingly learn to wait for it there, and beg of God that the eye may be opened in you, which alone can ſee it when it doth appear. Indeed God's viſitation is upon this nation in an eſpecial manner; his light and power is breaking forth in it, againſt the darkneſs and power of the ſpirit of Satan, which hath captivated and ſtill captivateth many. Ye deſire outward liberty, and the enjoyment of your outward rights; would ye not be free inwardly? Free from the baſe, earthly, ſelfiſh nature and ſpirit, which man, fallen from God, and the glory wherein he created him, is degenerated into? Oh! is not the power of God, and life of Chriſt, able to reſtore man to this? He that created man at firſt ſo glorious in his own image, is he not able to create him anew? Oh! hear, my dear countrymen! the power is revealed which createth anew; and they that receive it, and are as clay in the hands of the great potter, given up to be formed by it, are daily created (by the operation of it) anew, into an holy, heavenly, innocent, living, tender, righteous frame day by day; and are made willing, daily more and more, to be the Lord's, in this day of his power; and do receive power to become ſons, and ſtrength againſt their ſoul's enemies: and the glorious work of redemption which God hath begun in them, the arm of his ſtrength mightily carrieth on in them, to their comfort and his everlaſting praiſe.

There is a ſpiritual Egypt and Sodom, as well as there was an outward; and there is a ſpiritual wilderneſs, and Canaan alſo; and the arm of God's power inwardly and ſpiritually hath been revealed in this ſpiritual Egypt, wilderneſs, and Canaan, as really as ever it was in the outward. Do ye not read of a Jew inward, and a circumciſion inward, and the leaven inward, and keeping the feaſt of unleavened-bread, even of bread that is not leavened with ſin? And he that eats of the unleavened bread, it unleavens him of ſin, and leavens him with life and holineſs: for it is an holy bread,

and

and a living bread. This is the bread which comes down from heaven, which they that feed upon live, and they that live feed upon. And though they be many, yet feeding upon this bread, they become one bread, one living body, conſiſting of a living head, and living members; for the ſame life and pure heavenly nature which is in the head, is communicated by him to the members.

But how ſhall we find this? may ſome ſay.

I will tell you how we found it, and how none can miſs of it, that ſweep the houſe, and make a diligent and faithful ſearch after it. That in the heart of man which turns againſt ſin, diſcovers ſin, draws from ſin, wherein God miniſters help againſt ſin, that is it. That is the pearl hid; that is the kingdom hid; in that is the righteouſneſs of God revealed from faith to faith, in all that receive and give up to this holy leaven. This is of the nature of God and Chriſt; this is a meaſure of his light, of his pure life; this is the law and commandment everlaſting, which God writes in the hearts of his ſpiritual Iſrael. For the inward Jew hath inward tables, where the inward law is written, for the inward eye to read. Oh! how nigh is God inwardly, to the inward people, in this our day! Oh! the pure glory is broke forth! But alas! men are in their ſeveral ſorts of dreams, and take no notice of it. What ſhall the Lord do to awaken this nation? In what way ſhall his power appear, to bring down unrighteouſneſs, and to bring up righteouſneſs, in the ſpirits of people? Do ye not think the Lord hath been at work? How could deceit be ſo waſted inwardly, and truth ſo grown inwardly, and overſpread more and more, and gain ground in the nation, if the hand and power of the Lord were not with it, bleſſing it. Oh! take notice of the handy-work of the Lord, ye children of men, and wait to feel truth near, and to partake of the living virtue and power of it, that ye may feel your hearts creating anew, and the old heavens and earth may inwardly paſs away, wherein dwells unrighteouſneſs; and the new heavens and the new earth may be inwardly witneſſed, wherein dwells righteouſneſs. Oh! that this nation might become a paradiſe of God! Oh! that every one might be ſenſible of his preſence, and power, and kingdom, and righteous government inwardly in the heart, from the king that ſits on the throne, to the beggar on the dunghill! Surely man was not made for himſelf! Surely he was not made ſuch a creature as now he is! but in the holy image of God, with love in his heart to God above all, and to his neighbour as to himſelf. Oh! what are the religions and profeſſions of ſeveral ſorts where this love is not found! The Lord is reſtoring his image, and bringing forth the true pure religion again. The pearl, the truth, contains and comprehends it. Oh! buy the pearl! oh! buy the precious truth! ſell all that is contrary to it for it; take up the croſs to all that is evil in thee, as the light in thee maketh it manifeſt, and thou ſhalt have the free poſſeſſion of it in thy heart, and feel it a root of life, a treaſure of life, a well of life, out of which the living water will be daily ſpringing up in thee unto life everlaſting. *Amen.*

The 22d of the 7th month, 1676.

THRE

THREE QUERIES

UPON

THREE VERSES of the XLVIth PSALM.

Verſe 4. *THERE is a river, the ſtreams whereof ſhall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Moſt High.*

Query 1. Which is the river, and what are the ſtreams thereof, which make glad the city of God? And which is the city of God which they make glad? which are the tabernacles of the Moſt High? and which is the holy place of thoſe tabernacles? Oh! my dear countrymen, that every one in this nation did underſtand and enjoy theſe things! For the Lord is ready to beget a will, to beget a thirſt in the hearts of the children of men; and whoſoever thirſteth, whoſoever will, is called to the waters, and may come to the waters, and take of the water of life freely (*Iſai.* lv. 1. *Rev.* xxii. 17.) yea, to the full ſatisfaction of their ſouls. For indeed this is the day of God's power, wherein he doth make his people willing to come to him, and to abide with him in the fountain of living waters; and thoſe that do come to him, and abide with him, he abundantly ſatisfieth with the fatneſs of his houſe, and giveth them to drink of the river of his pleaſures, *Pſal.* xxxvi. 8, 9. Mark, God is the fountain of living waters, with him is the fountain of life, a river of pleaſures, a river whoſe ſtreams make glad the whole city, even the holy place of all the tabernacles of the Moſt High; and he giveth his citizens to drink of it; and whoſoever drinketh of it, it maketh them glad, it refreſheth their life. Oh! that more knew what this means!

Verſe 5. *God is in the midſt of her, ſhe ſhall not be moved; God ſhall help her, and that right early*; or when the morning appeareth, or from the morning appearing.

Query 2. How is God in the midſt of this city? Is it not more gloriouſly in an inward way, than ever he was in the temple in the outward Jeruſalem, in an outward way? How is ſhe built? How is ſhe founded and ſituated? How comes it about that ſhe ſhall not be moved? How is God her refuge and ſtrength, and preſent help in the time of trouble? After what manner doth God ariſe inwardly, and ſcatter his enemies? How doth the morning-light help her? After what manner, when the enemy cometh in like a flood, doth the Spirit of the Lord lift up a ſtandard againſt him? Ah! bleſſed are they that know and experience, and live in the enjoyment

of theſe things! Oh! that this whole nation did ſo! Were it not worth the ſuffering of much, the denying of much, and the bearing of much judgment, to come to this?

Verſe 10. *Be ſtill, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among* (or in) *the heathen: I will be exalted in the earth.*

Query 3. What is that ſtillneſs wherein God is known to be God, not outwardly in notion, but inwardly in the heart? Where is that ſilence of mind, wherein God teacheth his Iſrael in the new covenant, to know him as he is; even all of them, from the greateſt to the leaſt? How will God come to be exalted in the heathen, and in the earth? Is it not by the light of his day, breaking forth and ſhining in them? Where this day breaks forth in any heart, doth it not break down and deſtroy the kingdom of darkneſs inwardly? And doth not the King of Glory conſume the man of ſin, the wicked one that was exalted in the temple before (which temple belonged of right to God) with the Spirit of his mouth, and deſtroy him with the brightneſs of his coming or appearing? *Iſaiah* xi. 4. 2 *Theſſ.* ii. 8. Then is the day known wherein the Lord alone is exalted. Oh! that this day were more known; and the Lord, who is indeed worthy, were more exalted, and all fleſh become his footſtool for ever!

Concerning the true Church and Miniſtry under the Goſpel, and the Maintenance thereof; ſome few Queſtions anſwered in Truth and Plainneſs of Heart, and left to the Witneſs and Teſtimony of GOD in other Mens Conſciences.

Queſt. 1. *WHICH is the true church, or the goſpel-church, or the church according to the new covenant?* For there was an old covenant, and a church according to that, under the law: and there is a new covenant, and a church according to that, under the goſpel.

Anſw. For the clearing of this to the hearts and conſciences of people, let us enquire and conſider what the new covenant is, and then it will more eaſily appear which is the church according to the new covenant.

The new covenant, according to plain ſcripture, and according to manifeſt experience in this bleſſed day of the ſhining of the goſpel-light in mens hearts, is a covenant of God's putting his law in the inward parts of people, and writing it in their hearts, and of his becoming their God and making them his people, and of teaching them all to know him (inwardly and experimentally) from the leaſt to the greateſt, and of being merciful to their un-

unrighteouſneſs, and remembering their ſins and iniquities no more, *Jer.* xxxi. 33, 34. *Heb.* viii. 10, 11, 12.

Now if this be the new covenant, the covenant of the goſpel-church, then they are the goſpel-church who are the people of God according to this covenant, who have the law put by God into their inward parts, and writ in their hearts; and ſo according to this law and covenant, have God to be their God, and are his people, and are taught by him to know him (as it is written, *All thy children ſhall be taught of the Lord*, Iſaiah liv. 13. and John vi. 45.) and whoſe unrighteouſneſs God hath been merciful to, and whoſe ſins and iniquities he remembereth no more, being waſhed away from their conſciences by the blood of the everlaſting covenant, which the blood of bulls and goats could never do: ſo that this is the New Teſtament-church (or goſpel-church); a church of Jews inward, as the law-church was a church of Jews outward: a church of inward worſhippers, of worſhippers in Spirit and in truth, *John* iv. 23. as the law-church was a church of worſhippers outward: a church of inwardly circumciſed ones, as the law-church was a church of outwardly circumciſed ones, *Rom.* ii. 29. A church of ſuch as are inwardly holy, as the law-church was to be a church of ſuch as were outwardly holy: a church of ſuch as offer inward incenſe and ſacrifices, as the law-church was a church of ſuch as offered outward incenſe and ſacrifices: a church of inwardly-redeemed ones, from the inward Egypt, from the inward darkneſs and power of Satan, as the law-church was a church of ſuch as were redeemed from the outward Egypt, and the power of Pharaoh outward: a church that hath the inward ark (*Rev.* xi. 19.) the inward preſence, the inward manna, *&c.* as the outward church of the Jews had the outward.

Queſt. 2. *Which is the true goſpel miniſtry, and who are the true goſpel miniſters?*

Anſw. Thoſe whom Chriſt ſends forth, in the Spirit and power of his Father, to gather and build up this church. Chriſt had all power in heaven and earth given him, even to this very end, to gather, defend, and build up his church: and he bid his apoſtles wait for the ſame power; and ſends forth his miniſters in the ſame power, that they may be able miniſters of the goſpel, which is not words but power, even the power of God unto ſalvation, *Rom.* i. 16. The new covenant ſtands not in the letter, but in Spirit and power; and they that are the miniſters of it, muſt receive life, Spirit, and power from Chriſt (the head) and miniſter in that Spirit, life, and power to the members, or they cannot nouriſh and build them up; yea, they muſt preach and miniſter to the world in it, or they are not able to gather out of the world into it. Chriſt, the Lord of his church, the foundation of life in his church, the everlaſting rock, is a living ſtone; and his church is built of lively ſtones: and how can any miniſter life unto them, or build them up in the life, Spirit, and power, but who are in the life, Spirit and power, and who receive life, Spirit, and power from the head, to

further, quicken, and build up the living members with? The milk which nouriſheth the living babe, is living, which muſt come pure from the breaſt of life, and not be mixed with man's wiſdom or brain inventions, or it cannot yield pure nouriſhment. What then muſt the bread, and wine, and water of the kingdom be, whereon the children and heirs of the kingdom muſt feed, or they cannot be ſatisfied? And the miniſters of the goſpel are ſtewards of this heavenly life, this heavenly Spirit, this heavenly power, this heavenly treaſure which they have in the earthen veſſels, and which God enables them to bring forth, for the feeding of his lambs and ſheep. Chriſt ſaid unto Peter, *Loveſt thou me more than theſe?* Peter anſwered him, *Yea, Lord, thou knoweſt that I love thee.* If it be ſo, *feed my lambs, feed my ſheep*, ſaid Chriſt to him. But how ſhould he feed them? In what ſhould he feed them? With what ſhould he feed them? All power, ſaith Chriſt, is given me in heaven and in earth; and I am to aſcend to my Father, and to receive the fullneſs of his Spirit; and do ye wait, and ye ſhall receive abundantly of the ſame Spirit and power, and then in that Spirit and power ye ſhall be able to feed my lambs and ſheep, that are begotten and gathered to me, in it; but out of it none is able to feed and build them up; for that is the very thing they are to be fed with and built up in. Indeed a man may be a miniſter of the letter, a miniſter of the law, without the Spirit and power; but of the goſpel he cannot poſſibly; for that conſiſts not in letter, but in Spirit, 2 *Cor.* iii. and the faith that is to be begotten there, is not to ſtand in the wiſdom of man, but in the power of God. The goſpel-ſtate, the goſpel-church, the goſpel-building, begins in the power, and is carried on in the power, and finiſhed or perfected in the power; and the whole miniſtry of the goſpel is to partake of this power, and miniſter in it, or they can do nothing in this work. Chriſt Jeſus our Lord begun it in this power, and none can carry it on without this power: the Lord God of Glory laid the foundation; *Behold, I lay in Sion for a foundation*, &c. *Iſai.* xxviii. 16. 1 *Pet.* ii. 4, 5, 6. And the quickening Spirit alone is able to make living ſtones and ſpiritual ſtones; and the Lord alone is able to build them up by the operation of this Spirit and power; and they that are the true miniſters of the goſpel, miniſter in this, and are to wait for it daily from God that they may miniſter in it.

Queſt. 3. *What is the maintenance of the miniſters of Chriſt, or what is to be the maintenance of the true miniſters under the goſpel?*

Anſw. Chriſt, who hath ſent them forth to miniſter in his name, hath provided for them; and they that are his true miniſters, are ſatisfied with what he hath provided for them, *Matt.* x. 10. being careful not to make the goſpel, which is to be an inward bleſſing, outwardly chargeable to any. The mind of the true miniſters is about the ſervice of Chriſt; how they may be faithful to him, gather ſouls to him, feed them with the bread of life from him; not what they ſhall have from men for ſo doing, for ſuch covet no man's gold or ſilver, &c.

Some

Some QUESTIONS anſwered concerning the LAMB's WAR.

Queſt. 1. *WHO is the Lamb?*

Anſw. He that takes away the ſins of the world. The word which was in the beginning. *Behold the lamb of God*, ſaid John, *John* i. 1. and ver. 29. He that was born of the virgin Mary after the fleſh; and was alſo the man-child, born of the travailing-church after the Spirit, *Rev.* xii. 5.

Queſt. 2. *Who makes war with the Lamb?*

Anſw. All that are in wickedneſs, in darkneſs, in ſin and corruption, and under the power thereof, who ſtrive to defend and maintain this kingdom againſt the appearance of his light, Spirit, and power in them.

Queſt. 3. *What ſtrength have they on their ſide that make war againſt the Lamb?*

Anſw. The ſtrength of the great red dragon, who hath ſeven heads and ten horns; and in every one of his heads is wiſdom, and in every one of his horns there is power. So that dreadful is the battle that is fought between them, either inwardly in the heart, or outwardly in the world, when Chriſt appears in his light, Spirit and power, to aſſault and break down the kingdom of darkneſs, and to ſet up his own kingdom, which muſt be ſet up, even in the world, *Dan.* vii. 14. 27. *Rev.* xi. 15.

Queſt. 4. *Did the great red dragon and his army ever (in any reſpect) prevail in this battle?*

Anſw. Yes; for even while the Lamb, and his pure life and holy teſtimony have prevailed, ſo that the dragon and his army could get no ground over them inwardly, but ſalvation (the wall and bulwark of God's heritage) and ſtrength, and the kingdom of God, and the power of his Chriſt, did prevail inwardly; yet the dragon, even then, hath prevailed over their goods, liberties, and lives outwardly; and he drove the woman, the true church, out of her place, as I may ſay, that ſhe was forced to fly into the wilderneſs, he ſo ſorely aſſaulted her: yea, after that alſo he made war with the remnant of her ſeed, and caſt ſome of them into priſon, and drank the blood of thoſe that would not drink his falſe church's cup, but keep the commandments of God, and have the teſtimony of Jeſus, *Rev.* xii. and *chap.* ii. 10. Yea, the beaſt to which he gave his power (which had ſeven heads and ten horns like him, *chap.* xiii. 1.) made war with the ſaints, and overcame them outwardly, though he could not overcome them inwardly; for he could not make them to worſhip him, *ver.* 7, 8. Nay, nor the ſecond beaſt neither, though he had horns like a lamb, and ſpake like a dragon, and exerciſed all the power of the firſt beaſt, and did great wonders, and had

had power to give life unto the image of the former beaſt, and would kill all that would not worſhip the image of it; and would ſuffer none to buy or ſell but ſuch as had the mark or name of the beaſt: yet neither could this beaſt overcome the followers of the Lamb, as to their inward life and teſtimony, though it had power to kill and ſuppreſs them outwardly, *ver.* 11. to the end, and *chap.* xiv. 9. to *ver.* 13. which plainly ſhews the ſaints had patience, and kept the commandments of God, and the faith of Jeſus, and would not worſhip the beaſt and his image, nor receive his mark, either in forehead or hand.

Queſt. 5. *What was the cry up and down nations, when the dragon and the beaſt thus prevailed, and when the falſe church carried her cup of fornications up and down through kingdoms and nations, and made the kings and inhabitants of the earth drink thereof; and who would not drink thereof, ſhe would not let them buy nor ſell, but impoveriſh, impriſon them, and drink their blood?* Rev. xvii. 2. and 6.

Anſw. The cry every-where was, *Who is like unto the beaſt? Who is able to make war with the beaſt?* Indeed there appeared no power any-where able to withſtand or reſiſt this power, which the dragon had, who gave it both to the beaſt which aroſe out of the ſea, and to the beaſt which aroſe out of the earth; both which joined together to perſecute all that would not drink of the falſe church's cup, which was golden without, but full of abomination and filthineſs of fornication, fornicating from the holy life, Spirit, and power of the Lamb inwardly, who is the head of the true church and true worſhippers, *Rev.* xiii. 4. and *chap.* xvii. 4, 5.

Queſt. 6. *What is the time of the dragon's, the beaſt's, and falſe church's thus prevailing againſt the true church, in reference to the outward, though they cannot prevail againſt its inward life and teſtimony; but that (through patience and ſufferings) prevails over and reigns inwardly, in the midſt of all their cruelty and oppreſſing of the outward man?*

Anſw. It is the time of Antichriſt's reign, and ſitting in the temple as if he were God, and exalting himſelf over all that is called God, and which ought to be worſhipped. It is the time of the true church's being in the wilderneſs, and of the man-child's (which the true church brought forth) being caught up to God; which things were to laſt, according to the ſcripture account, one thouſand two hundred and ſixty days, or a time, times, and half a time, 2 *Theſſ.* ii. 3, 4. *Rev.* xii. 6, 14.

Queſt. 7. *What will the Lamb do when this time is out?*

Anſw. He will come and make war again; he will come with his heavenly armies, armed with ſpiritual armour, and fight an heavenly battle; yea, he will judge and make war in righteouſneſs, againſt the unrighteouſneſs of the dragon, and the beaſt, and the falſe prophet; and his heavenly armies ſhall follow him their captain and leader, on white horſes, cloathed in fine linen, white and clean, who ſhall fight in his Spirit and power, againſt all that he fighteth againſt; and out of his mouth goeth a ſharp ſword, that with

with it he ſhould ſmite the nations; and he ſhall rule them with a rod of iron, and make the ſpirits of all his oppoſers bow under him, and fly to ſhelter themſelves from that wrath which they cannot eſcape. Oh! who would not kiſs the Son, that he might not provoke the Lamb to wrath againſt him, whoſe wrath is dreadful! *Rev.* xix. 11. to the end. *Pſal.* ii. 11.

Queſt. 8. *What ſhall the cry be, when God's Spirit and power prevaileth over the dragon's ſpirit and power, when the Lamb gets the victory, when he ſmites the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips ſhall ſlay the wicked; when he brings down the dragon, beaſt, and falſe prophet, and the falſe church, mother of harlots (which hath drunk the blood of ſaints) with his vials, plagues, woes, thunders,* &c.? *when Babylon the great city falls, which made all nations drunk with her ſpiritual wine of fornication?*

Anſw. Then the power which doth this ſhall be magnified. Then it ſhall be ſaid no more, who can make war with the beaſt? but who can withſtand this power? Who can make war with the innocent, righteous Lamb (who hath his ſword in his mouth) and with his tender-hearted, faithful followers, and proſper? *Who ſhall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? For all nations ſhall come and worſhip before thee; for thy judgments are made manifeſt. Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; juſt and true are thy ways, thou King of ſaints,* Rev. xv. 3, 4. *Yea, a great voice of much people in heaven ſhall ſay, Hallelujah, ſalvation, and glory, and honour, and power unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are his judgments; for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his ſaints at her hand,* chap. xix. ver. 1, 2.

Now doth it not concern all people to conſider which is Sion, God's holy mountain, and which is the Jeruſalem of his building; and the holy city of God, the holy church of God, the mother of all the truly living children? for the Jeruſalem which is above, and which is free, is the mother of them all, *Gal.* iv. 26. And alſo which is Babylon, the city built by man, and the ſpirit of Antichriſt, in a kind of likeneſs, but not in the real nature of the true church; that they may wait for and follow God's call to come out of her, and may not partake of her ſins, of her ſorceries (*Rev.* xviii. 22.) of her fornication from the pure life, Spirit and power, and ſetting up worſhips, and compelling people to worſhip in her forms (which are out of the life, and out of the power) that they partake not of her plagues, which will indeed be very dreadful, ſuch as ſhall affright any from coming near her, or meddling with her ſpiritual ſorceries and fornications any more, *Rev.* xviii. 4. and *ver.* 9, 10. Oh! therefore let every one conſider what the beaſt is, what his image, what the mark in the forehead, what in the right hand; and take heed he be not found worſhipping the beaſt and his image, or receiving his mark, either in his forehead or right hand, leſt God make him to drink of the wine of his wrath, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation, and he be tormented with fire and brimſtone in the

the preſence of the holy angels, and in the preſence of the Lamb, and have no reſt day nor night, *Rev.* xiv. 9, 10, 11. I had rather run great hazards outwardly, and ſuffer much affliction and perſecution from men, to keep my ſoul true to God, in the ſpiritual worſhip and teſtimony which he hath given me, againſt all falſe ways and invented worſhips, than expoſe my ſoul to the hazard of drinking of this dreadful cup of God's indignation; which the Lord God of tender mercies teach men, and give them true wiſdom, to avoid and eſcape. *Amen.*

The CONCLUSION.

BEHOLD my ſervant ſhall deal prudently, he ſhall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. As many were aſtoniſhed at thee (his viſage was ſo marred more than any man, and his form more than the ſons of men); ſo ſhall he ſprinkle many nations; the kings ſhall ſhut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them, ſhall they ſee; and that which they had not heard, ſhall they conſider, Iſai. lii. 13, 14, 15.

Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips; therefore God hath bleſſed thee for ever. Gird thy ſword upon thy thigh, O Moſt Mighty, with thy glory and thy majeſty. And in thy majeſty *ride proſperouſly, becauſe of truth, and meekneſs, and righteouſneſs; and thy right hand ſhall teach thee terrible things. Thine arrows are ſharp in the hearts of the king's enemies, whereby the people ſhall fall under thee. Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the ſcepter of thy kingdom is a right ſcepter. Thou loveſt righteouſneſs and hateſt wickedneſs, therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladneſs above thy fellows,* Pſal. xlv. ver. 2. to 8.

Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be ſtrong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence, he will come and ſave you. Then the eyes of the blind ſhall be opened, and the ears of the deaf ſhall be unſtopped. Then ſhall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb ſing; for in the wilderneſs ſhall waters break out, and ſtreams in the deſert. And the parched ground ſhall become a pool, and the thirſty land ſprings of water; in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, ſhall be graſs with reeds and ruſhes. And an highway ſhall be there, and a way, and it ſhall be called the way of holineſs; the unclean ſhall not paſs over it, but it ſhall be for thoſe: the wayfaring men, though fools, ſhall not err therein. No lion ſhall be there, nor any ravenous beaſt ſhall go up thereon, it ſhall not be found there; but the redeemed ſhall walk there. And the ranſomed of the Lord ſhall return and come to Sion with ſongs, and everlaſting joy upon their heads: they ſhall obtain joy and gladneſs, and ſorrow and ſighing ſhall flee away, Iſai. xxxv. ver. 3. to the end.

Bleſſed

Bleſſed be the Lord God of life for ever! theſe ſcriptures, and many more, are ſweetly and preciouſly fulfilled in the hearts of a remnant, in this our day. They were once (in a degree) fulfilled in the day of the appearance of the word of life, in the prepared body of fleſh. They were again more generally fulfilled, in the day of the pouring out of his Spirit, and gathering a people to him, both from among the Jews and Gentiles, whom he did ſprinkle with his holy life, Spirit, and power. And they are again fulfilled in the hearts of many, after the long night of darkneſs, and great and large apoſtaſy from the Spirit and power of the apoſtles. Bleſſed, Oh! bleſſed be the Lord, the Sun of righteouſneſs hath again ſhone forth, and appeared inwardly in a glorious, living, powerful manner, to them that have feared his name; and he hath been a God of vengeance to the man of ſin; yea, to all that was dark, fleſhly, and corrupt in them; and a God of mercy and tender bowels to thoſe which panted after, and waited for his ſalvation. And the healing virtue from under the wings of the Saviour, and the holy anointing, hath dropped upon the eyes of the blind, the pure eye-ſalve, and they have been opened; and the ears of the deaf, by the voice of the Son of God, have been unſtopped; and the inwardly and ſpiritually lame have leaped as an hart; and the tongue, which could not name God in truth and righteouſneſs, but hath been dumb before him, and before men alſo, could not but ſing, becauſe of the breaking forth of the waters and ſtreams of life, upon the thirſty land and parched ground, making them a pool and ſprings of water; which land, which thus is changed from its wilderneſs and parched ſtate, into an holy, freſh, and living ſtate, the dragons do not lodge in; nor is it any more an habitation or cage for unclean and noiſome birds (as great profeſſing Babylon, the mother of harlots, with all her fleſhly-profeſſing daughters, is) but life dwells there: the Holy One is in the midſt of this land, and it brings forth the fruits of life and righteouſneſs, to the Righteous and Holy One. And here the King of Glory's highway, even the way of holineſs, is known, which none but thoſe whom he makes holy can walk in. Let men profeſs what they will, yet being unclean in heart and converſation, they cannot paſs over to come into this way; but the holy, they which are made holy by God, and keep to, live in, and follow that which is holy, though wayfaring men, and though otherwiſe fools, yet they ſhall not err here, but be preſerved by the holy power, in the holy way, which is prepared and caſt up for theſe: and as for that which would tear and deſtroy, it ſhall not be found on all that holy mountain where theſe live and feed. Yea, here is the houſe of God and throne of God, and God the judge of all, and Jeſus the mediator of the new covenant, and the blood of ſprinkling, where the ranſomed of the Lord enjoy the preſence of the bridegroom, whom God hath ſet king, and who reigns on his holy hill of inward and ſpiritual Sion, and cauſeth them to ſing, who feel him reign (even the everlaſting ſeed of

life to reign inwardly in the heart). Oh! everlaſting joy is upon their heads! they have obtained joy and gladneſs; and ſorrow and ſighing flee away, when the joy unſpeakable and full of glory is felt ſpringing in the heart, from the ſenſe of the preſence and enjoyment of the bridegroom. For of a truth, the Lord hath comforted Sion; yea, he hath comforted many of her waſte places (he was angry with her daughters, before their filth was purged away by the Spirit of judgment and burning; ſince that time his anger hath been turned away, and he hath comforted them, *Iſai.* xii. 1, &c.); and he hath made her wilderneſs in many hearts like Eden, and her deſert like the garden of the Lord (even like the garden that he waters): and how can joy and gladneſs but be found here, with thankſgiving and the voice of melody? *Iſai.* lviii. 11. and *chap.* li. 3. Thus it is with ſuch of the gathered people and nation of the Lord, that hearken and give ear to him, and have known the way of life to proceed out of his mouth, and his judgment to reſt for a light, *ver.* 4.

SOME

SOME SENSIBLE,

WEIGHTY QUERIES,

CONCERNING

Some THINGS very ſweet and neceſſary to be experienced in the TRULY-CHRISTIAN STATE.

Whereunto is added,

A POSTSCRIPT,

CONTAINING

Some QUERIES on ISAIAH L. 10, 11.
A SCRIPTURE of Deep Counſel and Concern to the darkened and diſtreſſed States of ſome among thoſe that fear and obey the LORD.

Written by one who hath been ſorely darkened and diſtreſſed for a long Seaſon, but at length mercifully enlightened and comforted by the Hand which afflicted and diſtreſſed him;

ISAAC PENINGTON.

Come, and let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath ſmitten, and he will bind us up, Hos. vi. 1.

And in that day thou ſhalt ſay, O Lord, I will praiſe thee; though thou waſt angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comforteſt me, ISAI. xii. 1.

A BRIEF

PREFACE.

INDEED the Lord hath reached unto me by his living power, and thereby hath begotten ſomewhat which he doth own, and which he hath taught to know and own him in his living appearances in my heart; and by its pure life and operations in me, I know it to be the true power. And truly I would fain have this life and power more and more reach to, prevail, and ſpread in my own heart, and in the hearts of other men: I am not for any notional religion out of the power, in any way or form whatſoever (no, indeed, I am not ſo much as for the very true form of godlineſs out of the power); but where there is any touch, any ſenſe, any operation, any ſavour of the true life and power any-where, my ſoul loveth and embraceth it, bleſſing the Lord for it. And oh! that this might be viſited by the Lord, wherever it is, and kept alive to the day of redemption, and led by the Lord into the pure and living way, and holy everlaſting covenant of life, wherein he redeems; for which end theſe queries have broke forth from me: and indeed, no leſs than a neceſſity (or a neceſſitous force of love and life purſuing me) hath conſtrained me to publiſh them, who with reverence of ſpirit commit them into the hands of the Lord, who can open the hearts of whom he pleaſeth, and give the living ſenſe of what comes from him. I am ſatisfied that God's powerful work of redeeming will go on. Oh! bleſſed be his name, who hath a mighty arm, and hath done mighty things with it inwardly in mens hearts! and we are in the true faith aſſured that he will yet do more mighty things, as he ſeeth good, to the gladding of the hearts of thoſe whoſe hope is in him, and who have no help beſides him.

SOME

SOME SENSIBLE, WEIGHTY QUERIES, CONCERNING Some THINGS very ſweet and neceſſary to be experienced in the TRULY-CHRISTIAN STATE.

Query 1. WHAT is the water wherewith the ſoul or inner man is to be waſhed, that it may be cleanſed from its inward filthineſs, as outward things are by waſhing with outward water? *Ezek.* xxxvi. 25. *Pſal.* li. 2. &c.

Query 2. What is the anſwer of a good conſcience towards God, when the ſoul is inwardly baptiſed and made clean? *Pet.* iii. 21.

Query 3. Chriſt ſaith, *Bleſſed are the pure in heart*? Do, or can, any witneſs purity of heart before this waſhing?

Query 4. How may the heart be ſprinkled from an evil conſcience, and the body waſhed with pure water; ſo that there may be a drawing near to God with a true heart, and in full aſſurance of faith? *Heb.* x. 22. *Pſal.* xxvi. 6.

Query 5. How might the Jews waſh and make themſelves clean? *Iſai.* i. 16. Could it be any otherwiſe done by them, than by taking heed to the word of the new covenant, nigh in the mouth and heart, to which Moſes had directed them? *Deut.* xxx. 14. *Pſal.* cxix. 9.

Query 6. What is the fire which takes hold of, and burns up the luſts and corruptions of the heart? Is it not the Word of Life within, which flames againſt evil, and hammers down evil? Doth not the Holy One in the midſt of the ſpiritual Iſrael do this? When Chriſt, who knocks at the door of the heart, is let in, and his voice hearkened to, doth he not become a Spirit of judgment and burning, judging and burning up what is evil there? Is it not bleſſed to know this ſpiritual appearance, and this work of Chriſt in the heart? *Iſai.* iv. 4. and x. 17.

Query 7. What are the enemies of a man's houſe? Who muſt overcome them? How may they be overcome? Is a man ſafe, or delivered from them till they be overcome? *Matt.* xv. 19. 2 *Cor.* x. 4, 5.

Query

Query 8. What is the houſe of the ſtrong man, where he dwells till he be diſpoſſeſſed? Who can diſpoſſeſs him? How doth he diſpoſſeſs him? How doth he ſpoil his goods, and then garniſh the houſe anew? Oh! what a new creation and change within is witneſſed when this is done! And who would not wait, and pray, and believe, and ſuffer the judgings and burnings of the Spirit of judgment and burning, that this may be done thoroughly and effectually? *Luke* xi. 21, 22. *Iſai.* xxvi. 9. 2 *Cor.* v. 17.

Query 9. What is that coming to Chriſt which none can witneſs but thoſe that hear and learn of the Father, and are taught by him, in the drawings of the life and Spirit of the new covenant, to come to the Son? *John* vi. 44, 45.

Query 10. Who can confeſs Jeſus to be the Lord by the Holy Ghoſt? Can any but they that receive the help of his Spirit, and feel ſomewhat of his lordſhip and holy dominion in their hearts? *Iſai.* xxvi. 13.

Query 11. What is the precious faith, which is the gift of God, which none can obtain but they that are born of God? *John* i. 12, 13.

Query 12. Can any rightly believe that Jeſus is the Chriſt, unleſs they receive this faith, which God gives to his own children, that are born of his Spirit, 1 *John* v. 1.

Query 13. Doth not this faith give victory over the world? (over the worldly nature and ſpirit within, over the worldly nature and ſpirit without alſo)? Can any other faith give victory? 1 *John* v. 4.

Query 14. What is the love of God's children? Whence doth it ariſe? How come they to love? Is it not of an heavenly ſpiritual nature? Doth it not ariſe from God's begetting them, and circumciſing their hearts, and teaching them in the Spirit of the new covenant to love him, and one another, yea, and enemies alſo, 1 *John* iv. 7. *Deut.* xxx. 6. 1 *Theſſ.* iv. 9.

Query 15. How come the children of God, who are begotten of him, to obey his commandments? Is it not from the conſtrainings of his love, which makes them natural and eaſy (where the birth and nature is grown up) and not grievous and burdenſome? *Matt.* xi. 33. 1 *John* v. 3.

Query 16. What is the fear God puts into the hearts of the children of the new covenant? Is it a fear taught by the precepts of men, or a fear ſpringing from the root of life within? Can any who receive this fear from God, and who are preſerved in the ſenſe of it (and in the holy awe and reverence which it produceth) depart from the holy, tender, living God and Father? *Jer.* xxxii. 40.

Query 17. What is the law which God writes in the hearts of the children of the new covenant? Is it not the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus? Is it not the law which the iſles wait for? *Iſai.* xli. 5. And do the iſles wait for it in vain? Oh! bleſſed be the Lord, by the once diſtreſſed and miſerable-ones, in this age it hath not been waited for in vain!

Query 18. What is the truth that makes free indeed from the law of ſin and death? Is it not the truth as it is in Jeſus; the inward truth, which

hath

hath virtue and power in it, to work againſt, and work out that which is contrary to truth, and ſo deliver and free the mind from it? For the light, which is truth, can expel darkneſs; the life, which is truth, can overcome death; yea, the truth, which is living, holy, and righteous, can overcome and ſubdue the unholy and unrighteous nature, and break down the ſtrongholds, and bring every rebellious and captivated thought into captivity and ſubjection, *John* viii. 32. *Rom.* viii. 1. *Epheſ.* iv. 20, 21. 2 *Cor.* x. 4, 5.

Query 19. How doth God cauſe the children of the new covenant to walk in his ſtatutes, and to keep his judgments, and do them? Is it not by putting his Spirit into them, and by the holy virtue, power, and operation thereof in them? Doth not that make them a willing people in the day of his power? And doth not that give them to do alſo, and ſtrengthen them with might in the inner man? So that not grieving that, or quenching that, that is a flame of life in them, and fills their hearts with joy; and the joy of the Lord is in their ſtrength, and in this joy and ſtrength they can rejoice, and work righteouſneſs, and remember the Lord and his ways, *Iſai.* lxiv. 5. *Ezek.* xxxvi. 27.

Query 20. Can any work righteouſneſs, or do righteouſneſs, but he that is truly righteous, inwardly righteous, in whom the righteouſneſs of God, the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, is revealed from faith to faith? Muſt not the tree be good, before the fruit can be good? Muſt not the heart be changed, be made holy and righteous, before it can bring forth that which is holy and righteous? Can any but the plants of God, the plants of righteouſneſs, bring forth the fruits of righteouſneſs? *Iſai.* lxi. 3. and 1 *John* iii. 7.

Oh! that people, nations, tongues, and languages, could underſtandingly, ſenſibly, and experimentally, as in God's ſight, with the ſeal of his bleſſed Spirit, anſwer every one of theſe things!

THREE QUERIES more added.

Query 1. DOST thou indeed know the new covenant? Haſt thou inwardly felt the ſpiritual powerful gathering by the mighty arm and power of the Lord, out of the ſinful nature and ſtate, into it? Doſt thou abide with God therein? Art thou daily taught and fed by him there? Theſe are very weighty things. Can any man be ſafe or happy without experiencing them? *Heb.* viii. 8. *&c.*

Query 2. Haſt thou experienced the true hunger and thirſt after the living waters? Haſt thou been called and led to them? Haſt thou eat and drank the bread, wine, and milk which thoſe waters yield? Haſt thou been abundantly ſatisfied with the fatneſs of God's houſe, and hath he given thee to drink of the river of his pleaſure? Hath the Lord opened an ear in thee to hear

hear as the learned? And haſt thou inclined thine ear, and come unto him who gives life, and received him who is life, and gives life in that inward, ſpiritual, living appearance of his in the heart, wherein and whereby he gives life? Haſt thou known his appearance inwardly, as of a living ſtone? Haſt thou heard and learned of the Father how to come to him, as to a living ſtone? And haſt thou been new-created and formed a living ſtone by him? And art thou a living ſtone, built upon him the living ſtone inwardly in ſpirit, daily living in him, and daily receiving ſpiritual life and virtue from him? If it be thus with thee, then ſurely thou doſt know and enjoy the everlaſting covenant, even the ſure mercies of David, *Iſai.* lv. 1, 2, 3. *Pſal.* xxxvi. 8, 9. 1 *Pet.* ii. 4, 5.

Query 3. Doſt thou ſenſibly and experimentally know how the Spirit of the Father begets the child-like life, love, and fear in the heart; and how the pure fear of the Lord is the beginning of wiſdom, and the living child's treaſure? And doſt thou know what the womb is wherein the living child is formed? What the Jeruſalem above is, which is the mother of all that are truly living? And how Chriſt is formed in all that are begotten, and born of, and live in the Spirit? *Iſai.* xxxiii. 6. *Gal.* iv. 26. *John* iii. 6. 8. *Gal.* iv. 19.

The CONCLUSION.

OH! how miſerable is he who is deceived about theſe things! Oh! how happy is he who hath received the true underſtanding from God, which cannot be deceived; wherein he hath the evidence and demonſtration of God's Spirit concerning them, and knoweth the truth as it is in Jeſus; as it is in his life, in his Spirit, in his power, who miniſters after the power of an endleſs life, unto all his ſheep, who are returned to the ſhepherd and biſhop of the ſoul, who hear his voice and follow him, where-ever he goes or leads, who is an eternal Shepherd, and eternal Door of life to his, and leads to precious paſtures, and ſweet ſtill ſtreams of life, and is giving the ſweet food, reſt, and pure pleaſure of eternal life unto his abundantly; even as it is his will, that after their many ſore trials, exerciſes, and travels (and faithfulneſs to him therein) they ſhould abundantly poſſeſs and enjoy it. Glory to the Lord for ever, whoſe kingdom is ſet up in the hearts of many, and who already reigns in the hearts of many, and will reign in the hearts of more! Oh! that men might hear the ſound of his everlaſting goſpel, and learn to fear him, and give glory to him, and know the hour of his judgment come in their own hearts, that by his judgment againſt ſin and unrighteouſneſs in them, they might come to know and worſhip him; and then the worſhip of the dragon and beaſt would ſoon come to an end in their hearts; and they would worſhip the begetter of holineſs, the begetter of life, the king of ſaints, who dwells and rules in thoſe that are his own,

own, as the devil the deſtroyer doth in thoſe that are his! The Lord God of everlaſting power break down the kingdom of Satan (the kingdom of unrighteouſneſs and darkneſs in mens hearts) and exalt the kingdom and ſcepter of his own Son inſtead thereof. *Amen.*

POSTSCRIPT.

Containing ſome QUERIES on ISAI. L. 10, 11.

Who is among you that feareth the Lord, and obeyeth the voice of his ſervant, that walketh in darkneſs, and hath no light? It is rendered in another tranſlation: *And no light ſhineth upon him* (which was Job's caſe in his great affliction, as is ſignified by him, *chap.* xxix. 2, 3.) *Let him truſt in the name of the Lord, and ſtay upon his God.* Ver. 10.

Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compaſs about with ſparks, walk in the light of your own fire, and in the ſparks ye have kindled, this ye ſhall have of mine hand: ye ſhall lie down in ſorrow. Ver. 11.

Query 1. DOTH not the tender and merciful God many times, in the bowels of his love and mercy, bring darkneſs and great diſtreſs upon mens ſpirits, that they might wait for his healing and redemption? Yea, doth not this befall ſome who fear the Lord, and are found in the holy reverence and obedience to him? And is it not good that it ſhould befall them?

Query 2. Should not men, in ſuch a condition of darkneſs and diſtreſs, truſt in the name of the Lord, and ſtay upon him till he cauſe light to ariſe out of obſcurity, and comfort them that mourn in Sion; giving them beauty for aſhes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praiſe for the ſpirit of heavineſs?

Query 3. Are not perſons very prone and liable, in time of darkneſs and diſtreſs, inſtead of waiting upon God for his help and ſalvation, to be kindling a fire, and compaſſing themſelves about with ſparks?

Query 4. Are there not ſome who cannot be content without heat and warmth in their religion and performances, and yet, inſtead of waiting for God's kindling the fire, and his cauſing the ſparks of life to ariſe, kindle a fire of themſelves, and compaſs themſelves about with ſparks of their own kindling?

Query 5. May not men, after they have kindled a fire and ſparks, walk in the light thereof? And may not God, in his juſt judgment and ſore diſpleaſure againſt them, leave them to themſelves, and give them up ſo to do?

Query 6. What will God do in the end, or what in the end ſhall befall them from God, who kindle a fire and ſparks, and have continued walking

in the light thereof, and have been heated and warmed thereby? Will not God cauſe them at length to lie down in ſorrow? Oh! that perſons that are ſerious in religion, might not thus err, and ſo provoke God to give them up to walk in the light of the fire and ſparks of their own kindling!

Query 7. When do men kindle a fire and ſparks of their own? Do they not firſt forget the God of their ſalvation, and become unmindful of the rock of their ſtrength? And do they not then plant pleaſant plants, and ſet ſtrange ſlips? (And where do they plant and ſet them?) But what will the harveſt be in the day of inheritance, when they come to reap and inherit what they have planted and ſown? (For what a man ſoweth, that muſt he alſo reap). Will it not be a heap for the fire of God's jealouſy to take hold on, in the day of their tribulation, anguiſh, and deſperate ſorrow of heart? *Iſai.* xvii. 10, 11.

Query 3. In what light do men build up a wall inwardly, and daub it with untempered morter, to ſecure themſelves from the wrath to come? Is it not in the light of the fire and ſparks of their own kindling? Will any wall or defence built up in the light of this fire or ſparks ſecure men? Will not the wrath of God, in the day thereof, break forth upon all the workers of iniquity, whatever their faith or hope be to the contrary? Will any wall defend the ſoul from the overflowing ſtorm of wrath, but the wall of God's ſalvation? And can any enter within that wall, but the righteous nation that keepeth the truth? *Iſai.* xxvi. 1, 2. The name of the Lord indeed is a ſtrong tower; but can any run into it, and get ſhelter in it, but the righteous? *Prov.* xviii. 10.

Query 9. Who is he, who, when he falleth, ſhall ariſe again; and after he hath ſat in darkneſs, the Lord ſhall be a light unto him? Is it not he that feareth the Lord, and obeyeth the voice of his ſervant, that in the time of his darkneſs and diſtreſs truſteth in the name of the Lord, and ſtays upon his God? Yea, is it not ſuch an one as is willing to bear the indignation of the Lord, becauſe he hath ſinned againſt him, until he plead his cauſe, and execute judgment for him? Will not the Lord bring forth ſuch an one to the light, and ſhall not ſuch an one behold his righteouſneſs? *Mic.* vii. 8, 9.

Query 10. When ſhall perſons light ariſe in obſcurity, and their darkneſs be as the noon-day? When ſhall their light break forth as the morning, and their health ſpring forth ſpeedily, and their righteouſneſs go before them, and the glory of the Lord gather them up? And when ſhall the Lord be their continual guide, and ſatisfy their ſoul in droughts, and make fat their bones, and make them like a watered garden, and like a ſpring of water, whoſe waters fail not? Are not theſe promiſes belonging to the goſpel ſtate? And are they not fulfilled in the goſpel ſtate, as people come to know and keep the goſpel faſt, and the goſpel ſabbath? Read *Iſai.* lviii. 6.

to

to the end, and wait on the Lord, to receive underſtanding from him, that in reading thou mayeſt underſtand.

Oh! that men knew the goſpel faſt, and the goſpel ſabbath, with the feaſts of unleavened bread, tabernacles, trumpets, *&c.* A little of the knowledge of the myſtery of the hidden life and power, is of more value, and would do their ſouls more good, than heaps of literal knowledge wherewith the world is ſo filled. The knowledge of God and Chriſt in the myſtery is no leſs than life eternal, in them and to them, who are taught in the new covenant, or miniſtration of the power of the endleſs life, ſo to know them.

THE

EVERLASTING GOSPEL

OF

Our Lord JESUS CHRIST,

AND THE

BLESSED EFFECTS thereof, teſtified to from Experience.

By ISAAC PENINGTON.

The darkneſs is paſt, and the true light now ſhineth. 1 JOHN ii. 8.

Ariſe, ſhine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is riſen upon thee: for behold, the darkneſs ſhall cover the earth, and groſs darkneſs the people; but the Lord ſhall ariſe upon thee, and his glory ſhall be ſeen upon thee. ISAI. lx. 2.

When the Lord ſhall build up Sion, he ſhall appear in his glory. PSAL. cii. 16. (indeed he doth ſo).

THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL OF Our LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND THE BLESSED EFFECTS thereof, teſtified to from Experience.

THE bleſſed meſſage which the apoſtles (who were ſent by Chriſt to preach the goſpel) heard of Chriſt, and were to declare to others, was, *That God is light, and in him is no darkneſs at all*, 1 John i. 5.

The end of Chriſt's ſending them with this meſſage was, that thereby (preaching it in the evidence and demonſtration of God's Spirit) they might *open mens eyes, and turn them from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they might receive forgiveneſs of ſins, and inheritance among them that are ſanctified by faith that is in him*, Acts xxvi. 18.

Now the eye of the mind being opened, and the mind turned from the darkneſs within to the light within, and from Satan's power to the power of God, which is revealed in the light, the ſoul in the light comes to ſee (over the darkneſs, and Satan who darkened it) the things of God and his kingdom, as they are revealed in the light, which makes them manifeſt.

As, Firſt, It ſees him, who is the rock, the holy foundation of God, the holy foundation of life in the ſoul; the living ſtone, by which all the other living ſtones are made alive, and they are taught of God to come to him as to a living ſtone, and ſo are built upon him, and become God's building and new creation in him, 1 *Pet*, ii. 5. 2 *Cor*. v. 17. And here, in this light, none can miſs of the true coming, hearing the voice of the Father, and being drawn and taught by him to come to the Son, *John* vi. 44, 45.

Secondly,

Secondly, Here the true Jew's ſtate, the ſtate of the inward Jew, and the inward circumciſion, and the true worſhip (even the worſhip of the Father in Spirit and truth) is known. For the Jew inward is a child of light, begotten in the light, redeemed out of darkneſs, and dwells and walks in the light, as God is in the light, 1 *John* i. 7. And the circumciſion is not a fleſhly act; but the cutting off of that which is fleſhly from the mind by the Spirit and power of Chriſt. And the goſpel worſhip, or the worſhip of the Jew inward, is the worſhipping of God in the newneſs of the life of his Son.

Thirdly, Here is the true repentance from the dead nature and dead works, which no man can attain to of himſelf; but is God's gift through his Son, whom God hath appointed to be a prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and forgiveneſs of ſins, *Acts* v. 31. I ſay here, that repentance is known, waited for, and received. For not to men in the darkneſs, and loving the darkneſs, is the true repentance given; but to them that are turned to the light, to them is repentance given unto life, *Acts* xi. 18. compared with *chap.* xxvi. 17, 18.

Fourthly, Here the true faith, the precious gift of faith is received, whereby men believe in him who gives life, and receive life from him. And this is the faith which gives acceſs to God, and gives victory over the world, and that which is contrary to God: the faith which is given in the light doth ſo; but the faith which men have in the darkneſs doth not ſo.

Fifthly, Here the croſs of Chriſt is known, which is an inward, living, ſpiritual thing, effectually crucifying that man that takes it up, and daily bears it, to all that is earthly and ſinful; and then the pure ſeed and life of Chriſt ſprings up in his earth, over the world, and every worldly thing, *Gal.* vi. 14.

Sixthly, Here the pure love ſprings in the heart, both to him that begets, and to him that is begotten. In the light there is nothing but love; but in the darkneſs there is no true love to be found; but the very love that is found there, is of the nature of enmity. It is the light of truth that purifieth the heart to the love unfeigned, 1 *Pet.* i. 22. *Deut.* xxx. 6.

Seventhly, Here the Lamb's patience and meekneſs is experienced, and the ſoul adorned with it. The Lamb is the light of the world, and they that are made lambs by him, partake of his ſweet and meek nature, learning of him to be meek and lowly in heart, and ſo have that patience and meekneſs from him *which no other can attain to*, Matt. xi. 29.

Eighthly, In the light the precious promiſes are fulfilled and partook of; which make them who partake of them, and in whom they are fulfilled, partakers of the divine nature; for the divine nature is not partook of in the darkneſs, but in him who is light. Man (who is darkneſs) cannot partake of the promiſes which belong to the children of light; but when, by the operation of God's power, his ſtate and nature is changed, and he is

now

now no more darkneſs, but light in the Lord, then the promiſes which were made to the children of light he cometh to have a ſhare in, *Eph.* v. 8. 2 *Pet.* i. 4.

Laſtly, In the light the holy anointing is received, the voice of Chriſt heard, and the new everlaſting covenant, even the ſure mercies of David, made with the ſoul, *Iſai.* lv. 3. The law of the new covenant (even the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus) written in the mind, and the holy fear of the new covenant, which cleanſeth and keepeth clean, put in the heart, and the bleſſed Spirit of the Father given and received, which gives to thoſe that receive it power to become the ſons of God, cauſing them to walk in his ways, and to keep his ſtatutes and judgments, and to do them. Oh! bleſſed diſpenſation of life and holy power, which the Lord hath cauſed to break forth among a deſpiſed people in theſe latter days! Oh! that the ſons of men would hear and underſtand this precious loving-kindneſs of the Lord, and put their truſt under the ſhadow of his wings, and know what it is to be ſatisfied with the fatneſs of his ſpiritual goſpel houſe, and to drink of the river of his pleaſures, and in his light to ſee light, *Pſal.* xxxvi. 7, 8, 9.

This opened in me this morning, in love and compaſſion towards the Papiſts. My bowels have often rolled over them, and been pained concerning them, to ſee how they are cloſed and ſhut up as to the true ſenſe and underſtanding of things of this nature. Oh! that they would prize the day of their viſitation, that they might hear the ſound of life both from others, and alſo in their own hearts, and the ſaving arm of the Lord might be inwardly revealed to them, and they effectually redeemed thereby!

I am no diſdainer of Papiſts, or any ſort of Proteſtants, nay, not of Turks or Jews; but a mourner becauſe of their ſeveral miſtakes, and a breather to the God of my life for tender mercy towards them all.

Aſtrop, 13th of the Seventh Month, 1678.

POST-

POSTSCRIPT.

AND in this light the true church, the goſpel church, the New Teſtament church, is known; which is a church of the children of light, a building built in the light, which church is in God the Father, and in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, 2 *Theſſ.* i. 1. In whom they are built together for an habitation of God, through the Spirit, *Epheſ.* ii. 22. Yea, in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth into an holy temple in the Lord, *ver.* 21. (for the Lord frameth them fitly together into a ſpiritual and holy building). And all that are here gathered out of the darkneſs into the light, who walk in the light, and abide in the light, are built upon the foundation of the apoſtles and prophets, Jeſus Chriſt himſelf being the chief corner-ſtone, *ver.* 20. And are no more ſtrangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the ſaints, and of the houſhold of God, *ver.* 19.

The goſpel church is the ſpiritual houſe of Jacob, which walk in the light of the Lord, *Iſai.* ii. 5. who go up to the mountain of the Lord (to that which is revealed to be the mountain of God in the laſt days, even ſpiritual Mount Sion, *Heb.* xii. 22.), to the houſe of the God of Jacob, where he teacheth his ſpiritual people, the inward Jews, of his ways, and they learn to walk in his paths: for out of this Sion ſhall go forth the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus (in the days of the goſpel) and the Word of the Lord from this Jeruſalem, *ver.* 2, 3. For Jeruſalem which is above is free, which is the mother of all the children which are born of God's Spirit, *Gal.* iv. 26. *John* iii. 6. And ſhe being the mother of them all, nouriſheth them all with the Word of life, which goeth forth from her; and all her children know and juſtify her their mother, *Matt.* xi. 19. Oh! that all, both Papiſts and Proteſtants, knew this true mother-church, this mother of all the living, of whom none but the living are born, and who nouriſheth all the living, and none elſe, with the law and Word of eternal life!

And if they knew the true church, the church which is of the true Jews, the church of the firſt-born, whoſe names are written in heaven, and did live and walk in the light of the Lamb, and follow the leader, the Shepherd of Iſrael, and faithful biſhop of the ſoul, who overſeeth and taketh care of the ſoul, they would learn, and come to know and experience theſe things following:

Firſt, The dwelling-places of Mount Sion, and her aſſemblies, and God's creating upon every of them a *cloud and ſmoak* by day, and the ſhining of a flaming

flaming fire by night, which is the defence upon all the glory that the Lord bringeth forth among his ſpiritual church and people, *Iſai.* iv. 5.

Secondly, They would know the land of the inward Jews, and ſpiritual Judah, and the ſong ſung therein, becauſe of the ſtrong city which the Lord builds there, and the ſalvation which he appoints for walls and bulwarks about it; and would ſee and know how none but the inward Jews, the inwardly circumciſed and ſanctified, even the righteous nation that keepeth the truth, can enter by the gates into that city, *Iſai.* xxvi. 1, 2. And they that dwell in that city, whoſe minds are ſtayed on the Lord, and who truſt in him, the Lord will keep in perfect peace, *ver.* 3. Then Jeruſalem is a quiet habitation indeed, and the reſting and feeding-places in it are ſure, *Iſai.* xxxii. 18. and *chap.* xxxiii. 15. 20.

Thirdly, They would know the feaſt of fat things, which the Lord of hoſts makes to all people that are here; to all people that come up to, and dwell on, his holy mountain, and ſerve and worſhip him in Spirit and truth. The Lord of hoſts maketh ſuch a feaſt as no eye hath ſeen, nor ear heard, nor can it enter into the heart of man to conceive what it is, but only by the Spirit of God; even a feaſt of fat things, even a feaſt of ſpiritual fat things, a feaſt of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined, *Iſai.* xxv. 6. They that are turned to the light, and follow Chriſt the light, ſhall not abide in darkneſs, but have the light of life, *John* viii. 12. Shall be tranſlated out of the kingdom of darkneſs into the kingdom of the dear Son, and they ſhall ſup with Chriſt, and he with them, and both together drink of the fruit of the vine of life new in the Father's kingdom.

Fourthly, They ſhall infallibly know here, in this light which ſhines on God's holy mountain, the deſtroying or ſwallowing up of the face of the covering caſt over all people, and the veil ſpread over all nations, *Iſai.* xxv. 7. For the veil is caſt over and ſpread in the darkneſs; but is done away and ſwallowed up in Chriſt the light: for the veil is done away in him, 2 *Cor.* iii. 14. And all that are in Chriſt, in his Spirit, in the light and liberty thereof, behold as in a glaſs the glory of the Lord, and are changed into the ſame image, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord, *ver.* 17, 18.

Laſtly, Here the king of righteouſneſs's highway is known, even the way of holineſs, which the unclean cannot paſs over; but the ſanctified in the light do walk in; and the wayfaring men here, though fools, do not err in, *Iſai.* xxxv. 8. For they that are taught of God in the new covenant, and follow the leading of his bleſſed Spirit, do not err.

Oh! that the true church were known, which is now come and coming out of the wilderneſs, leaning upon her beloved, who led and

leads her out thence, into her own land of life and glory, where her light ſhines, and ſhe ariſeth and ſtandeth upon her feet before the Lord, and the glory of the Lord ſhines upon her, and covers her! Happy is the eye that ſeeth this, and the ſoul that hath a ſhare in it!

A Further

A

Further Teſtimony to TRUTH,

Revived out of the

RUINS of the APOSTASY:

OR,

Several Things opened from the SPIRIT of TRUTH, touching the Way of Life and Salvation;

WHICH WILL

Reach to the Witneſs in the Hearts of thoſe whoſe Spirits are quickened, and whoſe Ears and Underſtandings are opened by the Spirit and Power of the LORD.

Written in a deep Senſe, and tender Love,

By ISAAC PENINGTON.

Ariſe, ſhine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is riſen upon thee. For behold, the darkneſs ſhall cover the earth, and groſs darkneſs the people; but the Lord ſhall ariſe upon thee, and his glory ſhall be ſeen upon thee. And the Gentiles ſhall come to thy light, and the kings to the brightneſs of thy riſing. ISAI. lx. 1, 2, 3.

O houſe of Jacob! come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord. ISAI. ii. 5.

THE PREFACE.

OH! how excellent and precious is the name of the Lord, in this our day, among his people, whom he hath gathered out of the worldly ſpirit unto himſelf, and whom he mightily defendeth in that wherein he hath gathered them! Inſomuch as it may now be ſaid inwardly, as it was of old outwardly, PSAL. lxxvi. "In Judah is God known; his name is "great in Iſrael. In Salem alſo is his tabernacle, and his dwelling-place "in Sion. There brake he the arrows of the bow, the ſhield, and the "ſword, and the battle, Selah." Oh! what mighty things hath the Lord God done in and for the ſpirits of his people! How hath he ſcattered the darkneſs from about them, broke the chains which held them in captivity! How hath he riſen up againſt all the enemies of their ſouls, diſcovered their ſnares, ſnapped in ſunder the weapons of war, which the ſpirit of darkneſs hath formed and lifted up againſt them! And how hath he preſerved them in life, in peace, in purity, in holineſs, in his power and dominion (over that ſpirit and the devices thereof) to this very day! He lives and reigns in power over all; and becauſe he lives, we live alſo; and becauſe he reigns, thoſe that are in his life and Spirit partake of his holy reign and dominion (over ſin, hell, death, and the powers of darkneſs) with him. Lo! this is our God; this is he whom we have ſought after, and waited for; and now his power is made manifeſt, now his righteouſneſs and ſalvation is revealed, how can our ſouls but be glad and rejoice therein! Yea, how can we conceal the good tidings of the day of our God, and of the goſpel of his ſalvation, which hath ariſen and broke in upon us! How can we but deſire to awaken the minds of men out of their ſleep, and call upon them to ſhake off the drowſineſs and blackneſs of the night, and to lift up their eyes towards the hill and mountain of God's holineſs, that they alſo may behold the beauty of his day in others, and wait for the ſpringing of his life and glory in themſelves!

Now there is ſomewhat revealed of God, of his own nature, power, and Spirit, wherein we have met with him. To this we invite, of this we ſpeak, concerning this we teſtify, as being that which the Father will honour, and wherein he hath and will appear. It is a poor, weak, low thing to conſider of, or behold with the eye and underſtanding of man; but there

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is the riches, the glory, the life, the righteouſneſs, the peace, the joy, the everlaſting power of the kingdom in it; and to them that receive it in the demonſtration of God's Spirit, and in the love of it, it is the wiſdom of God and his power to the redemption and ſalvation of their ſouls. Indeed of all the wiſe builders (out of the true ſenſe and power) it is rejected at this day, as it always was of old; but to us who are called of God, taught by him, who have received an underſtanding from him, &c. we know the value of that which comes from him, being inſtructed by him not to judge according to the appearance, but to judge the righteous judgment; and in the righteous judgment, in the balance of the ſanctuary, we find this little deſpiſed light to be elect and precious, even the foundation-ſtone, the corner-ſtone, and the top-ſtone of the building of God. And this we teſtify to men in true love, and from certain knowledge and experience which we have received from him that is true, and hold in him that is true.

Now this precious pearl (of which we teſtify) lies hid deep within; and thither muſt men come to know it, to purchaſe it, to poſſeſs it; and thither it is the deſire of our hearts to bring men. Nor do we open the things of God before men to this end, that they might get a knowledge thereof into their brains, and feed on it there; but through tender love we bring theſe things a little into the very view of men (as the Lord enables us); not that they might ſtick there, but that having a taſte of the excellency and beauty of truth, they might be inflamed (with deſires after it) to travel thither, where it is to be had. Therefore dwell not in the notion, delight not in the outward knowledge of the thing itſelf (though the knowledge be ever ſo ſweet, pleaſing, ſatisfactory, and demonſtrative to the mind); but come to the everlaſting ſpring. Feel the meaſure of life in thy particular, and that will lead thee to the ſpring of life, from whence the meaſure comes as a gift from the Father to thee, to bring thee to the Father. And ſingly for this end have I been drawn to write what follows, in ſervice to the Lord, in faithfulneſs to him, in dear love to the ſouls of men, eſpecially of thoſe who have formerly been travellers, and have felt ſomewhat of the Lord, and yet retain deſires and breathings in their hearts after him. Oh! that the Lord would touch their ſpirits, diſcover to them the way everlaſting, and lead them therein to do that which their ſouls darkly deſire and ſeek after; to which there is no other way than that which hath been from the beginning, only there have been various diſcoveries and manifeſtations of the one way! But what greater diſcovery can there be than of the thing or ſeed itſelf, which the Lord hath been pleaſed to make manifeſt in this day of his glorious mercy, love, and power, whereof he hath raiſed up many witneſſes, whom he hath enabled (by his Spirit and power) to give a living, clear, certain teſtimony to? Happy is the ear that hears! for that alſo muſt be of God, as the meſſage and meſſengers are known to be.

A FURTHER TESTIMONY to TRUTH.

Some QUERIES concerning CHRIST's Righteouſneſs, how it juſtifieth. Whether as inwardly revealed and dwelling in the Heart, or only as imputed, or both.

Query 1. IS not Chriſt the righteouſneſs and juſtification of the ſoul with God? Is not he made of God unto us righteouſneſs, and are not we made the righteouſneſs of God in him? How is this done? Is it not by being ingrafted into him, covered with him? Is this a meer imputation? or is it not rather a bringing the ſoul into the thing itſelf, and a drawing his nature, life, and Spirit over the ſoul, which was and is always righteous in itſelf, and ſo accounted with God? And he that is found in him, cloathed with him, emptied of himſelf, and filled with him, is he not really righteous in the ſight of God?

Query 2. Is not the principle of life, which is from Chriſt, of the ſame nature with Chriſt? is not it alſo holy and righteous? yea, is not Chriſt the fullneſs in it? And he that receiveth this principle, doth he not receive life, receive Chriſt, receive righteouſneſs? Can the righteouſneſs of Chriſt be ſeparated from the ſeed of his life, nature, and Spirit? Can a man deny himſelf, go out of himſelf, give up to that, and be found in that, and not found in the righteouſneſs? or can a man come to righteouſneſs by imputation without that?

Query 3. This principle or ſeed of life being from Chriſt, of Chriſt, and one with Chriſt in nature, though not of the ſame ſtature and fullneſs, yet hath it not the property and virtue of all that is of Chriſt in it? Do not all the promiſes belong to this ſeed, and go along with this ſeed? Doth not all that is good in man ſpring up from this ſeed? He that receives this, doth he not receive that which is righteous, and which makes him righteous, ſo far as he is of it, and in it? yea, the ſacrifice of Chriſt in the fleſh, the virtue thereof, the forgiveneſs of the Father for the ſake of his Son; doth it not go along with this? and is it not accepted for that man who

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is found here, and his iniquities (which he committed formerly) freely forgiven him for his name's ſake? Yea, are not his ſins afterwards alſo blotted out upon the ſame terms, he returning to this, abiding in this, and being found in this, and wherein the remiſſion of ſin, and the power againſt ſin, is alone to be felt and received for ever? So here is the imputation in its right place, and the right uſe and pleading of the ſacrifice of the Son, which here (in this its proper place, and in this ſtate) prevails with God, and not otherwiſe. For the kingdom, the righteouſneſs, the peace, the joy, the power thereof, *&c.* is placed by God in this ſeed, which is as a grain of muſtard ſeed: and he that ever finds it, muſt ſo find it; and he that ever joins to it, muſt ſo join to it; and he that ever receiveth it aright, muſt ſo receive it.

Query 4. Is not he that is born of God, new created in Chriſt Jeſus? and is not the new creature and new creation righteous in the ſight of God? When Adam was created at firſt, he was created in God's image; and was not that image righteous, and he righteous in that image? And when man is regenerated, renewed, brought again into the image, is not the image again holy and righteous, and he in the image?

Query 5. Is not faith the gift of God? And is it not holy, ſpiritual, and righteous in its own nature, and in the creature to whom it is given? And being given to the creature, is it not owned by God as ſuch, and ſo juſtified in the creature? Is not the faith which is of God, as righteous as the unbelief from the root of bitterneſs is unrighteous? And doth not God own and juſtify that as righteous, as well as condemn and reject the other as unrighteous?

Query 6. Is not the obedience of the ſoul in Chriſt, and from the principle of his life in the ſoul, and through his Spirit, righteous? nay, as righteous and juſtifiable in the ſight of God, as the diſobedience of the firſt nature is unrighteous?

Query 7. Are not all the works which are wrought in God, righteous? and doth not he that doth truth, bring them to the light, that it may be made manifeſt that they are wrought in God (*John* iii. 21.) Now there is no condemnation, but juſtification, to the deeds that are wrought in God; as there is no juſtification, but condemnation, to the works that are wrought out of him.

So that here now he that is indeed of God, he that is new created in Chriſt Jeſus, he knows the Father and fountain of righteouſneſs, the Son of righteouſneſs, the righteous ſeed, the righteous faith and obedience of the ſeed, and the works which are wrought by the power and in the Spirit, which being brought to the true light, are always juſtified by it.

Concerning the True CHURCH and MINISTRY.

THERE is a great noiſe in the world about church and miniſtry. Many are affirming which is it, and many are doubtful and enquiring about it; and many are truly and groundedly ſatisfied, having received the knowledge of the thing from God, who is not deceived about it, nor deceiveth any, but giveth the true underſtanding of theſe and other things, to them that wait upon him aright; to wit, in his fear, and in the ſilence of the fleſhly wiſe part before him. Now I have a teſtimony to give concerning theſe things, which that ear which is of God can hear, and to that I deſire to ſpeak.

That is the church which is the ſpiritual body of Chriſt. The church is Chriſt's ſpouſe, he the huſband. The head is living, and ſo are all the members of the body. The head is anointed, and the oil wherewith the head is anointed, runs down from the head upon all the body; and that upon which the oil runs not, is none of the body. Now no outward thing can make one a member of this body; much leſs can any outward thing, way, profeſſion or practice, make a church. The church under the law was made ſo by outward things, by an outward gathering, an outward circumciſion, an outward law, an outward worſhip, &c. but the goſpel is a ſtate of ſubſtance, a ſtate of the inviſible things, of perſons inviſibly gathered by the Spirit into the life and power of God, inwardly circumciſed, inwardly baptiſed with the Holy Ghoſt, and with fire, inwardly worſhipping in Spirit and truth, bowing at every ſound and name of the Lord Jeſus: and what is of an outward ſtate here, is brought forth and preſerved by the power of the inward appearing, and dwelling in it. So that this is the church now: a people gathered by the life and Spirit of the Lord; a people gathered by the power from on high, abiding in the power, acting in the power, worſhipping in the power, keeping in the holy order and government of life (both inwardly in their own hearts, and outwardly in their aſſemblings and walkings) by the power. Chriſt was made a king, prieſt, and prophet, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endleſs life; and in this power he gathers, governs, and preſerves his church, and miniſtereth from, and by, his Spirit and power in it. Now find this power of the endleſs life, find a people any-where gathered by this power, and in this power; there is the church, there is the living body, there is Chriſt the head, whoſe dominion and ſtrength is over all, againſt whom the gates of hell cannot prevail.

And ſo for the miniſters of this church. The ſame thing that gives to know the church, gives to know the miniſters thereof; for they alſo are of

of God, called by him, receiving power from him, and abiding and miniſtering in that power. So that there are three things requiſite to a true miniſtry, without which they cannot be right, or execute their office rightly.

1. *They muſt be called by God.* The miniſtry under the law, this was their warrant; they were called and appointed of God thereunto. Chriſt himſelf took not the honour to himſelf, but he was called of God to this prieſthood, as Aaron to his. So the apoſtles and miniſters, in the firſt publication of the goſpel, were called and appointed by Chriſt. And when the everlaſting goſpel is again to be preached, God ſends his angel with it, as *Rev.* iv. 6.

2. *They muſt receive ability and power from God.* The elders that were to help Moſes, were to receive of his ſpirit. Under the law, the prieſts were to be anointed with the outward literal oil, and the miniſters of the goſpel are to be anointed with the inward ſpiritual oil. Their work is ſpiritual; and how can they perform it, but by the anointing, by that preſence, guidance, life, virtue, and power of the Spirit, putting itſelf forth in them? The apoſtles themſelves, who had been taught by Chriſt, who knew his converſation and doctrine, who were eye-witneſſes of what they were to publiſh, and had received an authority and commiſſion from him, yet were not to go forth meerly upon this call and commiſſion, but to wait for power from on high; and when they had received the Spirit and power, then they were made able miniſters of the New Teſtament, not of the letter, but of the Spirit and power.

3. *They muſt abide in the power, keep in the power, feel the motion, virtue, and aſſiſtance of the power, in all their work and ſervice.* They muſt neither pull down, nor build up, nor watch over, or overſee the flock in their own wiſdom, in their own ſpirit, in their own wills; but in the anointing, in the light and guidance of the Lord. This gathering, this building, this work of the Lord begins out of fleſh, out of man; and fleſh muſt be kept out of the whole carrying on of it.

And indeed unleſs the miniſters of the goſpel be in the Spirit, in the life, in the power, how can they miniſter to the nature, to the ſpirit, to the life in the body? yea, ſo much as to the leaſt member in the body? They may miniſter outward knowledge to the man's wiſdom, to the man's underſtanding; but that is not the food that is to be miniſtered to the church, nor is that part in man to be fed by the true miniſter. But they are to miniſter life (living food) from the living fountain, from the head, from the Spirit of Chriſt in them, to the particular members under their charge; and ſo are to be good ſtewards and ſhepherds to the flock, giving every one their proper portion in due ſeaſon.

It was no ſmall matter to be a miniſter under the law. It was eaſy to err, and miniſter amiſs then. It was eaſy erring from the letter, unleſs great care and circumſpection was uſed to keep ſtrictly to it.

But it is a much more weighty thing to miniſter under the goſpel, to receive the power, to miniſter in the power, to that which is begotten and born of the power. And this is precious, and (without controverſy) of God, wherever it is found. But they only that are of God, can hear and receive this miniſtry, (as 1 *John* iv. 6.) The uncireumciſed ear cannot hear here, nor the wiſe and knowing according to the fleſh. The wiſdom of God is fooliſhneſs to him, and the myſteries of his kingdom (the myſtery of his life, and the true godlineſs) are riddles, and direct madneſs to the eye of his wiſdom: ſo far is man degenerated from God, and bound down with chains of darkneſs and corruption. And he that would know the true church, or be of it, and hear the voice of God in his true miniſtry, muſt firſt take up the croſs to that part in him which is not of God, and receive from God the eye which ſees, and the ear which hears.

An OBJECTION concerning the Newneſs of the WAY of TRUTH, anſwered: With a tender expoſtulating EXHORTATION.

Object. *IT is objected againſt us, that this which we teſtify to, hold forth, and practiſe, is a new way, ſprung up of late, never known nor heard of in the world till ſome few years ago.*

Anſw. The light eternal, when it ſhineth out of the darkneſs, after the great apoſtaſy from the Spirit and life of the apoſtles, is new indeed to thoſe that were overwhelmed and buried in the darkneſs of the night, and ſo never ſaw or heard of it before; but it is not new in itſelf, but the ſame that it was from the beginning. This ſeed of life, this ſeed of bleſſing, is the ſame that was promiſed at firſt to bruiſe the ſerpent's head. The ſame which was promiſed to Abraham, when the goſpel was preached to him. The ſame that ſaved all (that believed in it) under the law; for it was not the types and ſhadows, and outward ordinances, which ſaved the ſoul then, but the ſeed, who was the Saviour from the beginning, and is the Saviour all along, even to the end: and it was the ſame which was the goſpel in the days of the apoſtles. They preached the ſeed alſo, the word of faith; Chriſt the way, Chriſt the power. Yea, all along the times of the apoſtaſy, this was the thing that preſerved the witneſſes, ſaving them from being ſwallowed up in the darkneſs, and keeping them alive in their teſtimony. And there is no other thing held forth now by thoſe who are in the truth, and raiſed up by the power of God in it to give teſtimony to it. This is it from whence life hath ſprung in any that have felt life, in all ages and generations. *This is the root and offspring of David, the bright and*

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the morning-ſtar. This is the deſire of all nations (Oh! that they knew their deſire) *and their ſaving health too*, without which they can never be healed! And O ye! who ever felt any thing of God at any time, which was true, either in reading the ſcriptures, or hearing a miniſtry, or in private breathings, *&c.* this was it which gave you to feel in that ſtate, to deſire after the Lord, to turn from vanity, to long for communion with him, *&c.* Oh! that ye were ſo far in it now as ye have been in times paſt! For there is no other thing we teſtify to you of (or deſire to draw you to) than that which was the root and ſtrength of your life in thoſe days. I remember that time very well, and what I was and felt among you, nor can I deny it at this day, but know that it was of the Lord; yea, my ſoul bleſſeth his name in the remembrance of it: but he that ſticks in the letter of that (having loſt the life thereof) is in a dead ſtate before the Lord; and in that dead ſtate hath not the true ſenſe and feeling, and then muſt needs err and miſtake concerning the truth, and (in that error) make uſe of his wiſdom and knowledge to reſiſt and oppoſe it. And this brings more death and darkneſs upon the ſoul, inſomuch as the very light there becomes darkneſs, and the very life dead; and if they could truly look inwards, they would ſee that they are not now there, what once they were, nor their duties or ordinances (as they account them) ſuch; but a blaſting and withering is come upon them, from the Spirit and power of the Lord, and they have loſt their beauty and freſhneſs, to all that with a true eye behold them. Therefore come back to the life; know that which formerly gave you life. Is it removed? ſtick not behind, but follow on. Oh! know the Lamb, who is the leader! And this is the great duty of duties to follow him whitherſoever he goes. He may in his tender mercy viſit in Egypt, in Sodom, in Babylon: but theſe are not the places of his reſt, nor ſo to be eſteemed, becauſe he once appeared, viſited, touched, refreſhed the ſoul there. But his dwelling-place is Sion, his holy city is Jeruſalem, where the Chriſtians dwelt with him before the apoſtaſy, and where thoſe that are redeemed out of the apoſtaſy, are again to dwell. For the darkneſs of the night is not to diminiſh or take away any of the beauty or brightneſs of the day for ever; but the brightneſs and beauty of the day, in its riſing and glorious growth, is to overcome and ſwallow it up. Therefore loſe no more time in diſputings, in thoughts, in reaſonings, in conſultings, with that which will never adviſe the ſoul for its good; but wait on the Lord, that ye may come (through his leadings) to the true ſenſe of his ſeed, to the feeling of the nature of his eternal light and life in the heart; and that will put an end to diſputes; yea, ſcatter the diſputing mind, and powerfully determine the controverſy in the pure ſenſe and demonſtration of the Spirit. And he that knoweth any thing of this, let him abide here, wait here, live here, dwell here, and breathe to the Father here, watching narrowly over that which would lead from hence, and draw the mind into another way, wiſdom, and ſpirit. And thus, O poor ſoul! if the Lord touch thine heart, and

open thine eye, thou wilt ſee thy beloved, even the choiceſt among ten thouſand; whom none can parallel, whom nothing is like to for excellency of nature, nor is there any can do for the ſoul as he! It is felt, it is experienced, it is teſtified unto you in the love, and in the truth: oh! that ye could hear! They are not the words of the letter, nor the obſervation of all that is in the letter, that can give life; but his voice gives life. The words that he ſpeaks (at any time) are Spirit and life; and if he ſpeak them not, *but* letter. So this is it we live upon; not the bread which we can make; not the things we can gather or comprehend from the letter; but the words which proceed from the mouth of God. Now this ſeed is his mouth, in and through which he ſpeaks to our ſouls, who fear before him, and wait upon him, in his own eternal and everlaſting ordinance, at the door and poſts of the everlaſting wiſdom. And here we meet with all in ſubſtance, in life, in freſhneſs, in purity, in power, that ever we met with of God; and we meet with ſomewhat more alſo than we formerly met with. And this teſtimony is given forth to you in the love of God, from his tender bowels, which know your preſent ſtate, your wants, your wanderings, your deep prejudices and ſettled hardneſs againſt his truth; yet he remembers the days of your youth, and cannot give over ſeeking after you, and crying unto you, *Oh! when will ye turn, when will ye hear, when will ye wait to feel life in the Spirit, and not increaſe death in you from the letter!*

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CAUTION

TO THOSE

Who are at any Time touched with the Power of Truth; how they afterwards hearken to and let in the Enemy, and ſo thereby have the good Seed ſtolen away, the true Senſe loſt, and the Mind filled with Prejudices and Stumbling-blocks inſtead thereof.

THE Truth of God being received into the inward parts, is found to be of a living powerful nature, working mightily there for the cleanſing and redeeming of the hearts. Yea, this is certainly witneſſed, that

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as the mind joined to deceit, is thereby defiled; ſo the mind joined to the truth of God, is by its power and virtue purified.

Now having felt this, and being filled with the love and good-will of God to the ſouls of others, how can we but teſtify it to others, who ſtand in need of God's truth (and its cleanſing property and virtue) as well as we; eſpecially being thereunto moved and drawn by the Spirit of the Lord?

Now when the Lord giveth forth the ſound in its power and life, it many times pierceth deeply through the earthly veil, and reacheth to its own; which (being reached to) anſwers to the teſtimony, ſaying, it is Truth. So here is a beginning of the work of God in that heart, the ſoul being touched with his truth, feeling it inwardly, and yielding in ſome meaſure to the overcoming virtue and power of it.

But then comes the ſubtil one, whoſe deſign and labour is to undermine and overturn the work of God in the ſoul; and he begets doubts, and jealouſies, and queſtionings, both concerning us, and concerning the doctrine taught by us, to ſuggeſt into the mind, as if it were not (nor indeed could be) of God: and ſo bringing the diſpute and determination into another part than where truth got entrance, he eaſily ſways the mind to determine againſt its own former feeling, and to turn from that work which was begun to be wrought in it by God, and from the worker alſo. And thus many poor hearts are entangled and carried back into captivity, who began to feel the ſtirrings of truth in their hearts (wherein is the power of redemption) which would have redeemed them as well as others, had they received it in the love of it, and became ſubject to it.

Oh! it is a precious thing to receive from God a ſpirit of diſcerning, which gives ability to diſcern his Spirit from the ſpirit of deceit! yea, it is impoſſible to be preſerved in the right Spirit and way, but as this is felt. For how can the Lord be received in all the motions and operations of his Spirit? or how can the contrary ſpirit be turned from in all its ſubtil devices, twiſtings, and reaſonings in the mind, unleſs there be a diſcerning (in the true light of the Lord) what is of the one and what of the other?

And ye that would not be deceived, ſink deep beneath the thoughts, reaſonings, and conſultations of the earthly mind, that ye may meet with ſomewhat of the kingdom and power (which carries its own evidence and demonſtration with it) and may be gathered into it, and find a ſenſe, knowledge, and judgment there, which never was deceived nor can deceive. Know the elect of God, which the deceits paſs over and cannot reach; for its nature and birth is beyond them. It came from the light of the Father. It lives in the light of the Father. It ſees in that light; yea, there its judgment and underſtanding is, where deceit never had power to enter. But he that conſiders as a man, ſees as a man, judges as a man, concerning the things of God, by what he can gather out of the ſcriptures, or conclude from his own ſenſe, knowledge, and experience, he may eaſily err; yea, indeed, he is in the way of error in ſo doing. For the pure religion, the

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pure knowledge, the right judgment, the living faith, begins in the power and demonſtration of the Spirit; and theſe are its limits, out of fleſh, out of man, out of his will, out of his wiſdom, out of the compaſs of his comprehenſion. And he that paſſeth not theſe bounds, never meets with the life, power, and virtue of truth. He may meet with a body of notions and formed knowledge, wherein he may tell of the fall of man, and reſtoration by Chriſt, and very exactly, according to a literal deſcription; but the life, the true knowledge, the powerful virtue is another thing, and is met with in another country, whither man cannot travel, but as he is ſtripped of himſelf, and new formed, made and brought forth in another.

Oh! therefore, ye that deſire after the Lord (that would be his, that would feel him yours, that would know his truth in the life and power of it) wait for the demonſtrations of his Spirit; learn to diſtinguiſh inwardly, between his teachings from his Spirit, and the teachings of another ſpirit from the letter. For it is ſo indeed: that other ſpirit would have taught Chriſt ſo; and he will teach any elſe ſo, that will hearken to him. Now he that is taught ſo, and follows ſuch teachings, wanders from God, is not accepted with him, but follows that which leads from him, under a pretence and appearance of leading to him. And here hardneſs and deadneſs grow and increaſe, the ſoul being turned from that which is living, and alone able to give life.

Queſt. *But how may I do, who am weak and full of doubts and fears, to keep in the ſenſe of truth, and to come to a certainty that I am not deceived therein?*

Anſw. To thee, who putteſt this queſtion in the uprightneſs and ſimplicity of thy heart, I have ſomewhat to ſay.

1. *Mind how thou waſt touched*, mind how thou waſt reached, obſerve what ear was opened in thee, and breathe to the Lord to keep that ear open in thee, and the other ſhut. For this I can aſſure thee in the truth of God, that with that ear which the Lord opened to truth (which thou felteſt his Spirit unlocking in thee, and letting in truth by) I ſay, with that ear thou ſhalt never be able to let in any thing afterwards contrary to truth. But if the enemy can open the other ear, that will hear his prejudices, his jealouſies, his doubts, his fears, his temptations, and let them in, to thruſt out that which entered at the other ear. Now canſt thou not diſtinguiſh, O poor ſoul (a little to help thee) between that which brought ſome ſenſe of truth into thee, and that which riſeth in thee againſt truth? Oh! fear before the Lord! oh! watch, and pray, that when the tempter comes, thou enter not with him into the temptation, and ſo loſe thy union and growth in that which is invaluable.

2. Keep thine eye and heart upon the preciouſneſs of what thou felteſt. Oh! remember, how freſh, how warm, how living it was; how it reached, how it overcame, how it melted. The remembrance of this (cleaved to in the

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mind) will be a ſtrength againſt the temptations and ſubtil devices of the enemy.

3. *Meddle not with the things that the enemy caſts into thy mind.* Conſider not whether they be ſo or no. He that conſiders of a temptation (in many caſes) hath let it in and is overcome already. When Eve did but hearken to what the Serpent ſaid, how ſoon was ſhe loſt and gone? The enemy many times brings temptations beyond the ſtate, capacity and ability of the ſoul, to determine. Theſe things, at preſent, are too high for thee. Thou haſt not yet received a proportion of life from God to determine them by; and if thou run beyond thy meaſure, and determine things in thy mind, which as yet are beyond thy reach, thou muſt needs run into the ſnare.

4. *The preſent determining of theſe things, would not be of ſo great advantage to thee, as thou mayeſt apprehend.* Why ſo? Becauſe the enemy hath many temptations and devices of the ſame kind (as well as of other kinds) which he would bring one after another. And when he brings a ſecond, a third, &c. that which engaged thee to conſider of the firſt, would engage thee alſo to conſider of the reſt. And if thou couldeſt find one anſwered, and not the other, that would appear to thee as ſo much the more weighty, and thou wouldſt hardly be able to eſcape conſenting to the tempter therein. Therefore the way is to keep out of him, in the upright ſenſe of what the Lord wrought in thee; for ſo far he is with thee, and abiding there, thou art out of the enemy's reach. But being drawn by the enemy to conſider of things that are out of thy reach, thou therein layeſt thyſelf open to his ſnares and betrayings.

5. *Mind what was forbidden thee, or required of thee in that time, when thou felteſt the warmth from God.* For there is then an heavenly voice, and an heavenly viſion moſt commonly in the heart, though the enemy turns the mind, as much as may be, from heeding it. There is then oftentimes ſomewhat of the worldly nature and courſe diſcovered, or ſomewhat of God's will made manifeſt; ſomewhat that thou doſt (or haſt done) which then thou ſeeſt to be not of the Father, but of the world; and ſomewhat perhaps of the Father, which thou knoweſt thou oughteſt to become ſubject to, but thou art afraid of the croſs, or ſhame, or wouldſt fain have ſome more clearneſs firſt. Oh! call this to mind afterwards; and if ever thou wouldſt receive life, and come into union with God's truth, and receive his Spirit and power, and be eſtabliſhed therein; become obedient to the heavenly viſion! Conſult not with fleſh and blood, but enter into the obedience of that very thing, which was forbid or required, be it little or much. This is the right way, this is that thy mind ſhould be exerciſed in. And if thy mind be exerciſed faithfully here, the Lord will ſtrengthen thee againſt the tempter, when he comes with his temptations and ſubtil objections. But if thou falter here, and become unfaithful in the little, thou art not like to meet with more, no nor with the preſervation of the Lord in that little. And indeed this is the cauſe of the miſcarriage of many,

many, becauſe they received not that little which was made manifeſt, in the love of it; but had pleaſure in the unrighteouſneſs, and ſo lingered in pleaſing the ſpirit of the world, both in themſelves, and others, when they were called by the Lord to quit it and travel out of it.

6. *Wait for the renewings of life and ſenſe in thee from God*; wait for another viſit, wait for another touch and demonſtration of his Spirit. Where didſt thou meet with it? Go thither again, wait there again, and look up to the Lord to ſtay thy ſpirit till he appear again.

But, oh! take heed, that before the light ariſe again, before the life ſtir again, thou be not gone (by hearkening to temptations) into an incapacity of knowing or receiving it. For this is the way of the Lord, the experienced way: after him (after the touches of his truth) comes the tempter with his reaſonings, deceits, likeneſſes, *&c.* Now the Lord is trying thee, how thy heart will ſtick to him: and if thou come off from the temptation, if thou ſtand clear of the enemy, the Lord will appear to thee again; ſtrengthen thee, comfort thee, open more to thee, lead thee further in the way of life, and nearer to the power and purity thereof: but if thou draw back from that, wherein the Lord began to work, the Lord's ſoul hath no pleaſure to appear any further to thee, or work any further in thee.

And one thing I will tell thee. If thou let not in the enemy's temptations, but abide (under the clouds, under the ſtorms, under the tempeſts, under the confuſed reaſonings, fears, doubts, and troubles) looking towards the Lord, waiting for him, and not making a league with the enemy againſt him in the mean time, the Lord will certainly appear; and when he doth appear, thou ſhalt find one of theſe two effects.

Either the power of the enemy's objections, or temptations, will be ſo broken, as thou ſhalt not then heed them; or they will be ſo anſwered by the appearance and light of the Spirit of the Lord, as thou ſhalt be ſatisfied about them. Now which of theſe is the better for thee, the Lord God knows, and that thou ſhalt be ſure to receive from him in that hour; neither will he leave thee, but ſecretly ſupport thee in the mean time; thy eye and mind being towards him.

The light and power of the Lord, when it ariſeth, ſcatters and breaks that into pieces in the mind, which was very powerful before; ſo as the ſoul doth not now ſo much as mind the conſidering or knowing of that, which the enemy had made it believe was ſo neceſſary for it to know. For mark; that which cauſeth me to grow, is the feeling of life, the ſenſe of the Lord's preſence and power with me, the living knowledge, the knowledge which quickens, and gives life. Now, when the life ſprings, when the light ſhines, when the Lord in the power and precious viſitations of his truth, reacheth to my heart, this is preſent with me. Then what matter I thoſe objections and prejudices, which the enemy caſts into my mind? Nay, I cannot heed them, being taken up with another thing of a deeper nature. Thus have I often found it by experience; all that troubled me,

and

and that I doubted of, vaniſhing in a moment; that being preſent with me, and prevailing in me, which puts an end to all thoughts, reaſonings, and diſputes.

Again, it pleaſeth the Lord at other times (when he ſeeth good) to open the mind, and let it into the ſight of thoſe things (it waiting upon him, and letting them alone his ſeaſon) which of itſelf it could never have waded through. Thus alſo have I ſeen the objections, and ſtumbling-blocks concerning this precious people (who are of God, as the firſt fruits of his powerful viſitation after the apoſtaſy); concerning their principle, way, doctrine, practices, *&c.* opened unto me in the clear light of God, and in the holy demonſtrations of his Spirit; inſomuch as I have manifeſtly ſeen, and been fully ſatisfied, that what was objected in my own heart, and is objected to in the hearts of others, hath been from the ſubtil accuſer of the brethren, who beareth falſe witneſs againſt them, and would draw as many as he can to partake in his falſe teſtimony, and ſo alſo to become falſe witneſſes againſt God, his truth and people. Therefore beware, all ye that deſire after the Lord, and would meet with the reſt and ſatisfaction of your ſouls in him, how ye be prejudiced againſt that, whereby God worketh in others, and whereby he hath appointed to work in you, and all whom he worketh in. For he hath ſent his Son to give life, and he will not give life by another. And he hath appointed his Son ſhall be received as a principle, as a ſeed of life, though as little as a grain of muſtard-ſeed; yet thus muſt he be received; and in this his low appearance hath he the preſence of God with him, and his power and authority; and what he, this little ſeed (though ever ſo little) requires, teaches, forbids, *&c.* muſt be obſerved. But there is none upon the earth can own or ſubmit to this, but he that becomes a child alſo; yea, a very little child. Man's ſpirit, man's wiſdom, man's knowledge, man's religion, man's zeal, *&c.* is too big to enter here. Men are too wiſe, too knowing, too rich from ſcriptures and experiences to ſubmit to this; as the Scribes and Phariſees were to ſubmit to Chriſt's appearance, doctrines, and preachings, when he appeared among them in that body of fleſh. Therefore come into the true feeling, out of the dead knowledge into the living ſenſe, where life, power, righteouſneſs, yea, the peace and joy of the kingdom, is taſted of, and in ſome meaſure witneſſed by thoſe, who bow down in ſpirit before the leaſt or loweſt name or appearance of Jeſus; the loweſt degree and meaſure of whoſe life is King and Lord over death for ever.

An OBJECTION againſt the PRINCIPLE, which in Faithfulneſs to GOD, and in Love to Souls, we bear witneſs to; briefly anſwered.

Object. *MANY do believe, and in that belief do object againſt it, that it is a natural principle, and* but *a natural principle: and ſo, in its utmoſt improvement, could lead but to the ſtate of Adam's nature, and not to the redemption and new life, which is in and by Jeſus Chriſt.*

Anſw. I can grant that it is natural, in a ſenſe; but not in the intended ſenſe. It is a principle indeed of God's nature, of Chriſt's nature; but not of man's nature. It is that which ſtands a witneſs in man againſt him, when he falls and tranſgreſſes. It is a light indeed that ſhines in his conſcience; but it was before his conſcience was, and is of an higher nature. Man is earthly (with his underſtanding, knowledge, reaſon, judgment, conſcience); but the light that ſhines in him (even in his dark, hard, unregenerate, earthly heart) is heavenly; ſuch as his darkneſs cannot comprehend, though it ſhine in his darkneſs. But wouldſt thou in true underſtanding know what it is? Feel it; come out of that darkneſs where it finds thee, into that light where it dwells, and then thou wilt know it indeed, and be able to judge of it better. Now I will tell thee how we know it to be the light of the new covenant. Why thus: Becauſe we find it diſcover to us the new covenant, and lead us into it; yea alſo ſhew us the ſins againſt the new covenant, and furniſh us with power from God againſt them, and preſerve us out of them. And with this demonſtration indeed, our hearts are ſatisfied; though we could alſo ſay further, we have witneſſes, both in heaven and in earth, concerning this thing, whoſe teſtimony fully concludeth it, to the full ſatisfaction of the ſoul, where it is heard and felt.

Some

Some QUESTIONS and ANSWERS concerning the New Covenant; opening the Nature and Way of it, as it is experimentally felt in the Heart, and witneſſed to in the Holy Scriptures.

Queſt. 1. *WHAT is the New Covenant?*

Anſw. It is a new agreement between God and the ſoul, different from that former agreement, which was between God and that people of the Jews. It is a precious glorious covenant, containing precious promiſes on God's part, and as eaſily to be obtained on the creature's part as can poſſibly be. It is a covenant of the eternal love of God; of life, peace, and reſt to the ſoul; of the power of the Lord ſtretched out for the ſoul, to deliver it from Egypt; carry through the wilderneſs; bring into the Holy Land; giving it its proper poſſeſſion and inheritance there; and maintaining it therein againſt all its enemies. Yea, this covenant contains very precious things, which the ſoul finds great need of, and rejoiceth in the ſenſe and preſence of, when they are felt flowing from the covenant into it; as writing the laws of God in the heart, putting his fear in the inward parts; yea, putting his own Spirit within, to be a fountain of life and ſtrength there, whereby he cauſeth the ſoul to walk in his ways, and preſerveth it from departing from him. Likewiſe in this covenant God becomes the teacher, who createth in the ſoul a capacity to learn, and cauſeth it to heed and profit. And in this covenant there is a forgiving of iniquity, and a remembering of ſins no more, but a deſtroying and rooting out of that which cauſed to ſin, and an healing of the backſlidings of the ſoul, and a loving it freely.

Queſt. 2. *How is this covenant made with the ſoul?*

Anſw. In Chriſt the ſeed, who is all in this covenant. He is the light of it; he is the life of it; he is the power of it; he is the righteouſneſs and ſanctification of it. By coming into him, the ſoul comes into this covenant; by abiding in him, it abides in this covenant; and by growing up in him, it grows up in this covenant.

Queſt. 3. *Is this an abſolutely free covenant? or are there any terms or conditions required of the ſoul in it?*

Anſw. It is abſolutely free in its own nature. It comes from the free love of God, it contains in it the free love of God, it is freely offered to all to whom it is offered, it is freely given to all to whom it is given. Here is no price, nothing of the creature's required for it; all that is required, is the creature's receiving of it and giving up to God in it. And here, and

after this manner, many things are required of the creature, without which the creature can never come to receive the covenant, abide in it, or reap the bleſſings contained therein. This the ſcriptures abundantly teſtify to; as alſo the experiences of thoſe who know and feel the nature and virtue of the covenant.

Queſt. 4. *What things are required in this covenant according to the ſcriptures, and according to the experiences of thoſe that enter into it, and reap the fruits and benefits of it?*

Anſw. 1. This is required, that when the Lord calls, when the Lord quickens, when the Lord toucheth the heart, openeth the ear, giveth a faculty and ability of hearing, that then the Lord be hearkened diligently unto, the ear (which he hath opened) kept open to him, and that that whereby he openeth the one ear and ſhuts the other be kept cloſe to, and he waited upon therein; the true ear may be more and more opened by him, and the other ear (which is apt to hearken to and let in the enemy) more and more ſhut. Who is there among us that hath not felt the Lord God requiring this of us? Wherein, as he hath been anſwered, the work of God hath gone on in us; and as he hath not been anſwered, the work hath gone backward, and not forward. And the ſcripture bears witneſs to the ſame, as *Iſai.* lv. 1, 2, 3. where the free covenant is proclaimed; yet there is ſomewhat even there required. *Hearken diligently: come and eat ye that which is good, and let your ſoul delight itſelf in fatneſs. Incline your ear and come unto me; hear, and your ſouls ſhall live; and I will make an everlaſting covenant with you, even the ſure mercies of David.*

2. Repentance is required, turning from the old unclean nature and ſpirit, and touching it no more; but cleaving to that which hath power againſt it, and preſerveth from it. This alſo is felt and witneſſed to be required of God now, and was alſo teſtified to of old, as 2 *Cor.* vi. 17, 18. *Touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and will be a father unto you, and ye ſhall be my ſons and daughters, ſaith the Lord Almighty.*

3. Faith, believing the teſtimony of truth, and receiving the Spirit's baptiſm, is required. He that will enter into this covenant, muſt believe the teſtimony of the goſpel (the record of God concerning his Son) with the faith which is of him, and muſt be circumciſed, baptized, renewed and changed by him. Now he that doth this ſhall be ſaved, as Chriſt promiſed, *Mark* xvi.; but he with whom is the power of life and ſalvation did not promiſe that any ſhould be ſaved otherwiſe.

4. Obedience of the goſpel, ſubjection to Chriſt in the rule of his Spirit, and keeping of his commandments, is required. For as the firſt covenant required the obedience proper to it; ſo the ſecond covenant requires the obedience proper to it. And as there was no ſalvation, or ſtanding in the firſt covenant, without the obedience thereof; ſo neither in the ſecond, without the obedience thereof. He that will enjoy the peace, the righteouſneſs, the juſtification, the life, the power of this covenant, muſt live in the

the Spirit, walk in the Spirit, fulfil the will of the Spirit; keep to the ſeed, keep to the anointing, that the evil-one touch him not; that the interrupter, the ſlayer, the deſtroyer of life in the heart, have not power over him, as he hath over any out of the limits of this covenant. For within it are all the good, but without it the evil things, the dangers, the temptations, the ſnares, the death and deſtruction of the ſoul; and whoever wanders out of the covenant, cannot but meet with them, and acknowledge it to be ſo, if he be in the true ſenſe. Therefore there muſt be a great care to abide in that which hath gathered, in that which hath quickened, in that which giveth the true ſenſe and underſtanding, and keepeth out of the wrong. How tender, how free was the love of Chriſt to his diſciples! yet he bids them abide in his love, and tells them how they ſhould do it: *If ye keep my commandments, ye ſhall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.*

Queſt. 5. *But how ſhall the ſoul be able to perform all theſe things? Are they required of it in its own ſtrength, or doth God undertake to perform and work all in it?*

Anſw. Not at all in its own ſtrength, will, or wiſdom (theſe are eternally ſhut out of this covenant); but in the ſtrength, life, and power, which flows from God in the covenant.

Queſt. 6. *How ſhall the ſoul receive this ſtrength, life, and power?*

Anſw. By embracing it as it comes, cleaving to it, panting after it, patiently mourning and waiting for it. (The viſion of good will come to that ſoul in the Lord's ſeaſon, and will not tarry). By not deſpiſing the little, and looking after more before the little be received, but thankfully entertaining the beginnings of life, the beginnings of the holy inſtructions, the firſt drawings from off the ſpirit and nature of this world, in whatever it be. He that diſputes not concerning the thing, but receives it juſt as it appears, in a ſimplicity and uprightneſs, watching thereto, he ſhall be bleſſed of the Lord, and meet with the deſire of his ſoul in the Lord's ſeaſon, when the Lord hath fitted and prepared his heart for it. Now this is ſo little and ſtrait a door, ſo poor and low a beginning, as the wiſdom of man can never enter at it; and if there ſhould be a little entrance in the overcoming power of life, yet that wiſdom will drive the ſoul back again preſently. Let me know the doctrine firſt, ſaith the wiſe man; I will underſtand the doctrine thoroughly before I will change my preſent way. No, ſaith Chriſt, *He that doth his will ſhall know of the doctrine.* Thou ſhalt know a little, which will reach to thy heart. There thou muſt begin; and being faithful there, thou ſhalt know further of the doctrine; but being unfaithful there, thou mayeſt be ſtumbled and prejudiced againſt the doctrine, but never be able to know it. Oh! the myſtery of life! Oh! the hidden path thereof, which none can learn but thoſe whom the Father teacheth! But many think to learn in that, which ever was, and ever will be, ſhut out. If Chriſt would lay his doctrine before them, and make it good

to

to their underſtanding, they would receive it. No, no; they muſt bow to Chriſt, to his name, to his power, to his will, to his way of manifeſting his truth; he will not bow to theirs.

Queſt. 7. *What are the ſins againſt this covenant, and what effects have they?*

Anſw. The ſins againſt this covenant are chiefly unbelief in the power, and diſobedience to the power, which are of a deeper nature than the ſins againſt the firſt covenant, and have more dangerous effects. The refuſing of this covenant is more dangerous than the refuſing the covenant of Moſes. And the breaking of this covenant; to wit, the ſtarting back from God (through an heart of unbelief) here, is more dangerous than the breaking of the firſt covenant.

Queſt. 8. *Why can this covenant be broken? Hath not God undertaken all in it?*

Anſw. It is an agreement between God and the ſoul, wherein things are required of the ſoul, through the life and ſtrength which flows from the covenant. And the ſoul may hearken to the enemy, and not to the Lord; may walk after the fleſh, and not after the Spirit; may luſt after high knowledge, and hidden things of the kingdom, as they of old did after prying into the ark; may draw back from the Lord in thoſe reſpects wherein it had given up unto him, *&c.* Now theſe, and ſuch-like, are breaches of the covenant; or at leaſt ſuch ſins againſt it as draw down judgments upon the ſoul at preſent, and at laſt utter caſting off, unleſs the ſoul be brought back by the judgments into the agreement again with the Lord in truth and uprightneſs. It is true, the Lord doth all in the covenant according to his good pleaſure; but withal, he hath appointed a way of his working out the life and happineſs of the ſoul, to which it is his good pleaſure to keep. And his way is Chriſt, his ſeed. Hence all the love, mercy, care, and tenderneſs of God flows. Hither is the ſoul to come for it; and here the ſoul is to abide, that it may enjoy and poſſeſs it. But if the enemy can by any means draw the ſoul out from hence, he draws it from its life and ſtrength, and from the ſweet bleſſings and influences of the holy and free covenant. Now the Lord hath not given power to the enemy to force from hence; but he gives power to the ſoul to abide with him here; and in the hour of diſtreſs, if it cry to him, he helps the helpleſs, and lifts up a ſtandard againſt the enemy.

Now all that deſire the ſweetneſs of this covenant, the life, the virtue, the bleſſings of it, oh! wait to feel and receive ſomewhat from God, and in that to fear before him, and walk worthy of him, and not to grieve or provoke his Spirit. For he hath the power of life and death in his hand, and whom he will he may have ſufficient cauſe againſt, to turn from and cut off when he pleaſeth; and whom he will he may extend mercy to, as far and as long as he pleaſeth; for it is his own, and he may do what he will with it. Only know this, God is love; God is bowels, infinite bowels; yea,

yea, his tenderneſs is beyond imagination or comprehenſion, and he hates putting away. The poor mourning ſouls that cry unto him, feeling their need of him, and gaſping after him, he cannot caſt off; no, nor any that come unto him in the truth of their hearts: but the wiſe, the confident, the conceited, from their apprehenſions of ſcriptures, that think themſelves ſafe by virtue of the covenant, and yet are enemies in their minds to the light of the covenant, theſe are out of the thing at preſent (in their own imaginings and conceivings), and are in the moſt danger of any I know. The Lord in mercy cauſe his light to ſhine, his life to ariſe, his power to be manifeſt, and thereby lead into, and preſerve in, his everlaſting covenant, according to his good pleaſure. *Amen.*

A QUESTION or Two, relating to ELECTION, anſwered.

Queſt. 1. *HOW may a man make his calling and election ſure?*

Anſwer, By making Chriſt ſure to him, in whom the calling and election is; for the Lord chuſeth only in him, and refuſeth or reprobateth only out of him.

Queſt. 2. *How may I make Chriſt ſure to me?*

Anſw. By receiving him, giving up to him, parting with all for him, and waiting upon him in the way and path of life, till I feel the power of that broken in me which would ſeparate from him. For what danger is there then, when the ſoul is naturally become the Lord's, rooted in his love, circumciſed in heart to love the Lord above all, even with the whole heart and ſoul? Certainly the love of the Lord cannot but flow in great ſtrength to that ſoul, and what can come between? But now, while there is ſomewhat ungiven up, ſomewhat yet ſtanding, in which the enemy hath a part, and by which he may enter, the ſtate of that ſoul is not fully ſure; but there may be a going back from the ſaving life into that wherein is the perdition and deſtruction of the ſoul; and whoever goes thither, meets with perdition and deſtruction, ſo far as he travels that way. For in the path of death there is death, which is met with by all that enter into, and walk therein; as in the path of life there is life. God is no reſpecter of perſons; but he is a reſpecter of his ſeed, and of his eternal covenant of life, which ſtands firm in his ſeed for ever. Here is life for every ſoul that feels the drawings of the Father, and comes to his Son for life, and abides in him; and there is death for every ſoul that comes not to this, and departs from this through the heart of unbelief. So the way of God is eternal and immutable; he cannot deny himſelf. He that believeth in the Son, hath life; he that believeth not, is in the death and condemnation which belongs to the unbelief. Now wouldſt thou know thy election, wait to know

and

and diſtinguiſh between Jacob and Eſau, Iſaac and Iſhmael, in thyſelf; for they were outward figures, and allegories of ſomewhat inward. Feel Eſau, the profane one; Iſhmael, the ſcoffer at the wiſdom, way, and ſeed of God: feel, I ſay, theſe (that are caſt off by God) caſt out of thee; and then feel Iſaac, the ſeed of the promiſe; Jacob, the plain birth of life, raiſed up in thee, living in thee, and thou in it. And then thou feeleſt the election, and art in the election. And as his ſeed is ſure to thee, and thy union with it, and ſtanding and abiding in it ſure, ſo thy election is ſure. Election is a deep myſtery, and none can read the ſcriptures about it (which indeed are hard to be underſtood, but eaſy to be wreſted) but they that underſtand the thing; that can read in the ſeed, life, power, and openings of the Spirit of the Lord, they read things as they are; but other men only read things as they apprehend and conceive them to be. So that the knowledge that God hath given his people is above all the knowledge that can be ſearched out, gathered, or comprehended by all the men upon the earth; whereby they know God better, the things of God better, the words and ſcriptures of truth better, than they themſelves otherwiſe (or any elſe) could poſſibly attain to.

A QUESTION anſwered concerning the Ground of Mens miſunderſtanding and wreſting of Scriptures.

Queſt. *WHAT is the ground of mens miſunderſtanding and wreſting of ſcriptures?*

Anſw. 1. Want of acquaintance with God's Spirit, and the right way of waiting upon him to receive the underſtanding of them. For though men may go thus far, as to know and confeſs that the Spirit of the Lord is the only revealer of the things of God, and the alone right interpreter of his own words; yet that man, who thus confeſſeth, may not certainly and diſtinctly know the Spirit of the Lord, and when he receiveth the interpretation of a ſcripture from him, or when from his underſtanding, or a ſpirit that is contrary to him. For there is another ſpirit near man, whoſe nature, work, and delight is to cauſe man to miſunderſtand, and miſ-walk by the very ſcriptures; and will bring things as warmly, and (as it were) clearly to him, as he can from ſcriptures, purpoſely to deceive and miſlead him. Now he that hugs and receives every thing that thus riſeth in him, eaſily runs into, and is ſurely caught in the ſnare of the enemy. Therefore a man muſt watch, and wait, and fear, and pray that he may diſtinguiſh between the nature and voices of ſpirits in himſelf, that ſo he may know (in the light of the Lord) when the Lord ſpeaks, and alſo when the myſterious ſpirit of deceit ſtrives to ſpeak like the Lord. Now man cannot

cannot know this of himſelf; but as he is taught by the Lord, at the very time when the ſnare comes: and he muſt not determine haſtily; but wait to feel that wherein the Lord appears and ſpeaks to him, and wherein the enemy cannot ſpeak. Thus feeling the birth of life in his heart, the ſeed which is of the Father, which hath an ear that knows the voice of the Shepherd, and ſinking into this, and liſtening in this (out of his own thoughts, reaſonings, and whole courſe of his own wiſdom), he alſo hath his ear opened to hear the true voice, and findeth ability here to diſtinguiſh it from the voice of the ſtranger, let him counterfeit ever ſo deceitfully. For the eye of the Lord, the eye of truth, the eye of life, the eye of the Spirit, pierceeth through, and diſcovereth all deceits to the ſoul that feareth before him, diligently waiteth upon him in his ſeed, and deſireth to walk faithfully therein.

2. Want of acquaintance with God's truth in the love, life, and power of it. For he that knows truth, that hath received from God the thing the ſcriptures ſpeak of, how eaſy is it to him to underſtand the words that ſpeak of that thing? But he who hath the knowledge of the thing but from the words, how eaſy is it for him to miſunderſtand the words? As for inſtance: he whom God hath juſtified, he who hath received the righteouſneſs of the Son, he who daily feeleth the blood of ſprinkling, *&c.* how eaſy and natural is it unto him to underſtand the words of ſcripture, which ſpeak of theſe things? But he that hath not received this, nor thus knoweth the thing, how eaſy is it for him to miſunderſtand the words; and ſo, from miſunderſtanding of the words, to ſet up another righteouſneſs for the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, than that which the Spirit of God intendeth in the ſcriptures?

3. The opinions, apprehenſions, ways, and practices of men, which they have taken up in the dark, and in which their minds are engaged, are a great lett in their way from the right underſtanding of ſcriptures, or the teſtimony of truth from others according to the ſcriptures. For there hath been a cloudy and dark day, or a great night of darkneſs upon the earth, wherein the light (which leadeth to the ſoul's reſt) hath not ſhined clearly in mens ſpirits; and ſo in this cloudy darkneſs men have wandered from mountain to hill, ſeeking their reſting-place. Now ſome have fixed and pitched on one mountain, ſome on another; ſome on one hill, ſome on another, ſaying, here is the reſting-place. So when the Spirit of the Lord comes and cries, *Depart ye, depart ye; this is not your reſting-place, for it is polluted*; they cannot hear. Why ſo? Becauſe they have already believed otherwiſe, and in that belief took it up for their reſt; and ſo cannot rightly underſtand or believe thoſe ſcriptures, or thoſe living teſtimonies from the Spirit of the Lord, which declare it not to be ſo; but are ready to wreſt the one, and reproach the other.

Some QUESTIONS, ANSWERS, and QUERIES, concerning DECEIT and DECEIVERS; as what they are, what diſcovers them, how Man may come out of them, and be preſerved from them, &c.

IN the truth there is no deceit; and they that are in the truth, are out of the deceit; and abiding there, are out of the reach of deceivers: but they that are out of the truth, are in the deceit already, and are liable daily more and more both to be further deceived, and to help to deceive others.

Queſt. 1. *What is deceit, and who are deceivers?*

Anſw. That which appeareth like truth, but is not; that is deceit: and they which are in a form of godlineſs, but are without the Spirit, life, and power of it, they are deceivers.

Queſt. 2. *Who are moſt liable to deceit?*

Anſw. The ſimple, the heedleſs, the careleſs, the credulous; thoſe that wait not upon the Lord in the light, power, and demonſtration of his Spirit, to try things; theſe (with good words and fair ſpeeches, and appearances of things) are eaſily led aſide from the truth itſelf into ſome likeneſs or reſemblance of it.

Queſt. 3. *Which is the time of deceit?*

Anſw. The night; the cloudy, the dark time, when the enemy hath raiſed his fogs and miſts in the minds of men, then is his time of deceiving their hearts.

Queſt. 4. *Is it now night or day?*

Anſw. It is night with ſome, day with others. Where the light is ariſen, there it is day; where the darkneſs covereth and poſſeſſeth the minds of men, there it is night.

Queſt. 5. *How may a man know whether it be night or day with him?*

Anſw. By waiting to feel ſomewhat of the life of God ariſing in him, by turning and hearkening to his witneſs. That will faithfully diſcover how it is with him, and where he is.

Queſt. 6. *How may a man come out of the darkneſs of the night into the light and brightneſs of the day?*

Anſw. By joining to the firſt glimmerings and breakings forth thereof upon him. The leaſt light of truth hath the ſame nature, virtue, and properties with the greateſt. Though not the ſame in degree, yet the ſame in kind; and he that will come to the greateſt, muſt begin with the leaſt. Light makes manifeſt; the day diſcovers both the things of the night and

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of the day. Haſt thou any diſcovery of either kind? Either of that which is good, or of that which is evil? Either of that which is of the worldly nature and the evil one, or of that which is of the heavenly nature and the Holy One? Join in immediately in the virtue, ſtrength, and power of that which makes the diſcovery, and thy ſpirit therein will find an entrance into the light of the day; and going on faithfully thus, it will daily more and more break in upon thee, even until it hath gathered thy ſpirit out of the blackneſs, darkneſs, and deceit of the night, into the beauty, brightneſs, and truth of the day.

Queſt. 7. *How may a man be preſerved from deceit and deceivers?*

Anſw. By abiding in that which diſcovers them to him, and preſerveth out of them; by dwelling in that light, in that life, in that power, in that truth, into which they cannot enter: by keeping to, and in, the elect of God, which never was deceived, nor can be deceived: for it is of God, it is his ſeed, of his nature, in which the wicked one (the deceiver) finds nothing, hath nothing in him to enter at; and he that abides in him, is ſafe in him. But he that goes forth out of the life, out of the light, out of the ſeed, out of the power which preſerves, out of the holy anointing, which keeps the eye open, he eaſily runs into, and is entangled in the deceivableneſs of unrighteouſneſs, judging it (for want of a true diſcerning) righteouſneſs; and then having judged that to be righteouſneſs which is in its own nature but unrighteouſneſs, he muſt needs alſo judge that which is the true righteouſneſs to be but unrighteouſneſs; and then (having paſſed this judgment in himſelf) he grows wiſe, confident, and ſtrong in his deceit, both believing himſelf, and alſo endeavouring to convince and perſuade others, that it is the truth. Oh! who knoweth the ſecurity of the little-ones of God, who have a being and ſtanding in his truth! The arm of his power is ſtretched round about them, and he is a defence and ſtrength unto them againſt all that would break in upon them (to make a prey of their life, or to ſhake their ſtanding in his truth), either inwardly or outwardly. Oh! bleſs his name, ſing high praiſes to him, ye that feel it, over all deceit or deceivables, over all the devices of the dark ſpirit, which entangleth others, and would alſo entangle you, but that his goodneſs, mercy, tender love, and powerful arm is ſtretched out over you. So to him be the praiſe, and the bowings of that ſoul, which feels his powerful and merciful preſervation, for ever and ever.

Now it is in my heart to add four queries, which, rightly weighed and reſolved, in and according to truth, may further open mens minds into the true ſenſe and right underſtanding of this thing.

Query 1. *Have not the laſt days, the perilous times* (the times foretold of by Chriſt and his apoſtles) *been a long while upon the earth, wherein iniquity hath abounded, and the love of many waxed cold, wherein men have been lovers of themſelves, covetous, boaſters, proud*, &c.? *Hath there not been a long night of darkneſs, wherein theſe things (with many other fruits and effects of the night)*

night) have hid and covered themſelves almoſt in all ſorts of profeſſors of Chriſtianity, under a form of godlineſs?

Query 2. *Is not their time expiring already, and in ſome degree expired? Was it not to have an end when the light and power of truth, which at firſt kept it back, did ſpring and ariſe again?*

Query 3. *Is not the day ariſen? Is not the darkneſs already paſt? And doth not the true light now ſhine (and the true power of life now appear) in many veſſels?* Let the ſouls, that deſire to know the truth of this, wait to feel that which is of God anſwer in them.

Query 4. *Where are the deceivers, and where is the deceit? Is it among thoſe that have embraced the light of life? or among thoſe who abide in their old darkneſs, and whoſe eyes are not yet opened to ſee the light and beauty of the day, which is ariſen in the hearts of thoſe that are quickened and raiſed by the power of the Lord?*

That the Way of LIFE and SALVATION is freely held forth by GOD to all; and there is nothing in him to lett, ſtop, or diſcourage any Man from receiving his TRUTH, and giving up to him in the Faith and Obedience of it, but very much to invite and encourage.

IT hath pleaſed the Lord, who is over all, and good unto all, to provide a remedy for the ſin and tranſgreſſion of the creature. For as ſin hath abounded unto death, ſo he hath cauſed righteouſneſs to abound unto life; yea, the free gift, which is as large and univerſal as ever ſin was, hath more power in it to ſave, than ſin hath to deſtroy. And there is no ground of diſcouragement for any (who hath not outſinned the day of his viſitation, and ſo the offer of mercy is over as to him) in reference to God; though the enemy of the ſoul ſtrives to raiſe up many diſcouragements and objections in the minds of many, to keep them from hoping in the Lord, and from giving up to his truth, which ſaveth all that receive it, and abide in it. Now it is in my heart at this time, from a true ſenſe, to ſignify ſomewhat concerning the nature of the Lord (and his real deſire to ſave even thoſe that periſh), which may conduce towards the removing of objections and letts of this nature out of the minds of men.

1. God is ſweetneſs, meekneſs, gentleneſs, tenderneſs, abounding in mercy and loving-kindneſs, pitying the miſerable, and naturally holding forth an helping hand towards them: yea, he is univerſally thus. There is not one miſerable ſoul, not one periſhing creature upon the face of the earth,

earth, but as he hath wiſdom and power to help it, ſo he hath tender bowels, and an heart thereunto. And it is not for want of ſomewhat to be done on his part, that ſouls periſh, but the failing always was, and ſtill is, on the creature's part.

2. God loveth all his creatures, and cannot but be good to them. He is outwardly good, he is inwardly good to them all. He can do nothing againſt any one of them, but what ſtands with his love and mercy. He doth not forget himſelf; he doth not loſe his nature in the manifeſting of his righteouſneſs, wrath, and ſeverity againſt ſin and ſinners.

3. He deſires not the death of a ſinner, nay, not of the wicked. How mercifully did he walk with the Jews in the firſt covenant? Did he ever deſire their miſcarriages, and the miſeries which came upon them thereby? Nay, did he not deſire their good, and their obedient walking with him therein for their good? *Oh!* (ſaid he) *that there were ſuch an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep my commandments always, that it might be well with them*, &c. *Deut.* v. 29. How mercifully doth he walk with all in the ſecond covenant, that are in any meaſure drawn within the limits and compaſs thereof! He is a Saviour, that is his nature; and he ſeeketh the ſalvation of his creatures with his whole heart, and with all his ſoul. And when he bringeth any to repentance, there is joy in his boſom: and when the enemy breaketh in upon any of his, or by any ſubtilty draweth them into that which deſtroyeth, his pure tender Spirit is grieved therewith, and mourneth becauſe of it. *O Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem*, (ſaid his true living image with tears) *how often would I have gathered thee!*

4. He would have all men to be ſaved, and come to the knowledge of the truth. God ſends his truth, his powerful truth, to ſave; and he ſhuts not any one out of it; but ſeeks (in the way he hath appointed) to gather all into it, that they might be ſaved by it.

5. He is very patient and long-ſuffering, waits long, tries long, invites often, touches often, draws often: yea, the very veſſels of wrath fitted to deſtruction, there is much patience and long-ſuffering exerciſed towards them, before the Lord can caſt them off, and give them up utterly to deſtruction. For mark, deſtruction is not his work or delight; it is the work of a ſpirit and nature contrary to his. *I came not* (ſaith Chriſt) *to deſtroy mens lives, but to ſave*; to give life to them. And this is the proper end of God in every miniſtration: his end is not death, deſtruction, increaſing of the condemnation of the creature, *&c.* but to bring it to life thereby, out of that which leadeth into the condemnation and deſtruction. Did he not for this end bear with the old world? Was not this the end of Noah's preaching to them and warning of them? Did he not for this end bear with the Jews in Egypt, in the wilderneſs, in Canaan, *&c.*? Is not this the proper intent of the goodneſs, forbearance, and long-ſuffering of God, that it ſhould lead to repentance? (*Rom.* ii. 4.) and repentance leads to mercy, remiſſion, and life.

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6. The ſacrifice of Chriſt had relation to all men. He was ſent out of God's univerſal love to mankind, to the whole world; and was made a propitiation by God for the ſins of the whole world.

7. There is no man periſheth for want of power; for there is power in the free gift which comes upon all. There is power in it to quicken, to give faith, to preſerve in the faith, to do all that is to be done in the ſoul; and it doth all every-where, as it findeth place and entertainment in the ſoul. But man refuſeth, man loveth the darkneſs, hateth the light, ſhutteth his eyes againſt it, withdraweth his heart from it, and ſo beateth back the purpoſe and counſel of God's love and good-will towards him. For as the Jews outwardly, in that outward covenant, almoſt always rebelled, reſiſted, and brought wrath upon themſelves, to the grief of God's heart and of his holy prophets; ſo do men in reference to the inward covenant (in that nature and ſpirit) exceedingly provoking the Lord, until his Spirit (in its holy jealouſy and indignation) turn from them, and give them up to hardneſs, ſenſeleſſneſs, and impenitency, which ſealeth up to deſtruction. But as Iſrael, in that firſt covenant, could never juſtly lay the cauſe of their deſtruction on God, but God did moſt juſtly lay it on them *(O Iſrael! thy deſtruction is of thyſelf, but in me is thy help)*; ſo neither can any blame the Lord, who periſh from, and fall ſhort of, the virtue of the ſecond covenant: for he faileth not in doing his part therein, no more than he did fail in the firſt. But man turneth from the power which ſaves, from the light which makes manifeſt, from the life which quickens; and this is his condemnation, and the cauſe of his periſhing: ſo that God will be juſt and clear of the blood of all men, and the blood of them that periſh will lie upon their own heads. Had there not been ſomewhat near every man, which had more power in it than ſin had, they might have had ſome plea before the Lord; but the preſence of this, the power of this, the working of this in every heart, more or leſs, leaves all men without excuſe, and clears the free-giver and his free gift in the ballance of righteouſneſs. For this gift of his is faithful to every man upon the face of the earth, never conſenting to his iniquities and tranſgreſſions in any kind, but ſtill teſtifying againſt them as the Lord pleaſeth to open its mouth. But who hath believed its report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Yet greater will the condemnation be upon them, upon whom the Lord hath more abundantly ſhined; and many will have a plea in reſpect of them, which the Lord will hear and conſider, and ſo they ſhall not enter into that depth of judgment and condemnation, which will light on ſuch as have reſiſted the light and power of life, in its more glorious and bright appearances and ſtrivings with them; even as Chriſt ſaid, *It ſhall be eaſier for Tyre and Sidon, Sodom and Gomorrah, in the day of judgment, than for Chorazin and Bethſaida, Capernaum and Jeruſalem.*

Therefore, O all men upon the earth, know the day of your viſitation! Make peace with the Lord, O tranſgreſſors! lay hold on his ſtrength, that

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ye may make peace with him. Believe not the liar, who would put you out of hope, but believe the voice of his love and tender Spirit. Turn in, liſten after him, watch if he do not call, mind if he do not draw; and do not ſay, I want power; but wait in humility, meekneſs and fear, until his power ariſe. Bear his judgments, wait upon him in the way of his judgments. Do not fly from him becauſe thereof; for therein is the mercy, life and ſalvation. Be not haſty, but wait long, believe long, hope long, feel the patience of the Lamb, learn the myſterious path of life from the inward teacher, that ye may certainly know it, and find your feet guided by his Spirit into it.

Is not the voice gone forth from him that is true? *Ho, every one that thirſteth, come ye to the waters*, &c. *and whoſoever will, let him take the water of life freely.* And is not he near who cauſeth the thirſt, and giveth the will? Whom hath the Lord excluded? Why ſhould any man exclude himſelf? The call is univerſal, the way is ſet open to all. That is at hand which hath life and power in it, and is ready to work in all. This commandment hath it received of its Father; and it is faithful which hath received it: and all that come to the Father here, in this gathering of life, the Father is ready to receive. Thy ſoul, O man! is the Lord's. It is very precious in his eye: he ſeeks to ſave it, and hath ſent ſomewhat into thy heart to gather thee from that which would deſtroy it. And this which he hath ſent, hath in it of the Father's love, of the Father's mercy, of the Father's power, of the Father's light, of the Father's life, of the Father's wiſdom, righteouſneſs, *&c.* and will gather thee out of the world into the Father's nature and Spirit, if thou wilt hearken to him with the ear which he will create in thee, and receive him with the heart which he will give thee: yea, he will help thee to turn from and forſake thy own wickedneſs, and the wicked ſpirit, and to turn towards him who is life, righteouſneſs, and peace to the ſoul, that is gathered unto him; do but give up thyſelf (in the faith and obedience which he is creating in thee) in the way of his quickening and renewing life.

Some QUESTIONS anſwered concerning the SPIRIT of CHRIST, and the Spirit of the SCRIBES and PHARISEES.

Queſt. 1. *WHAT kind of ſpirit was the ſpirit of the ſcribes and phariſees?*

Anſw. A ſtrict, zealous, righteous ſpirit, according to their underſtanding and apprehenſions of the letter. They faſted much, they prayed much, they

they gave alms, they were great contenders for the circumciſion and ordinances of Moſes.

Queſt. 2. *What kind of ſpirit was the Spirit of Chriſt?*

Anſw. A righteous, ſtrict, and zealous Spirit, according to the power of the endleſs life. He was in that from which the righteouſneſs of the law came, and which brought it forth and fulfilled it in his veſſel.

Queſt. 3. *What did the ſcribes and phariſees judge of Chriſt according to their apprehenſions and underſtanding of the letter?*

Anſw. They judged him a ſinner and tranſgreſſor of the law of Moſes, a looſe perſon, an eater, a drinker, a friend of publicans and ſinners; one who taught not his diſciples to faſt and pray, but rather to break the law of God, and tranſgreſs the ſabbath; yea, one who was a blaſphemer, and a deceiver of people, *&c.*

Queſt. 4. *How came the ſcribes and phariſees thus to judge of Chriſt?*

Anſw. Becauſe they were in that ſpirit, nature and mind, which giveth wrong judgment. For it is not a gathered knowledge from the letter, which makes able to judge of ſpirits, and about the things of God; but a receiving and being born of the Spirit. For from the Spirit alone is the right underſtanding of the letter, which the Spirit hath to give, and giveth to the true birth.

Queſt. 5. *What did Chriſt judge of the ſcribes and phariſees according to his knowledge of them from the Spirit and power of life?*

Anſw. That they were hypocrites, painted-walls, and ſepulchres, which made a fair ſhew in the fleſh, but were not of nor in the truth.

Queſt. 6. *Is the ſpirit of the ſcribes and phariſees to be found now in the world?*

Anſw. There is nothing new under the ſun. The ſpirit of wickedneſs and deceit is always the ſame, in all ages and generations; and the Spirit of holineſs and truth is the ſame alſo. So that Cain, Iſhmael, Eſau, the ſcoffer and perſecuter of the prophets (of Chriſt's apoſtles and holy martyrs) are to be found in every age (the ſame in Spirit and nature with them): and ſo are Abel, Enoch, Iſaac, Jacob, *&c.*

Queſt. 7. *Where is the ſpirit of the ſcribes and phariſees now to be found?*

Anſw. They in all profeſſions (gatherings and walkings) that are ſtrict, zealous, and righteous, according to their own underſtandings and apprehenſions of the letter, and not according to the Spirit and power of the endleſs life, they are of and in that ſpirit?

Queſt. 8. *How may a man come out of the ſpirit of the ſcribes and phariſees, and into the Spirit of Chriſt?*

Anſw. By coming to the power of the endleſs life wherein Chriſt's miniſtry is, wherein his Spirit is felt and miniſtereth. This ſhuts out all the deceits and devices of that ſpirit which lieth in wait to deceive. He may entangle the mind about the letter, about the underſtanding of ſcriptures, and practices and ordinances there: but he that begins in the Spirit (in the power

power of life, in the living demonſtration of truth) is out of his compaſs; and there abiding, groweth up and remaineth out of his reach.

Queſt. 9. *How may a man come to the power of the endleſs life?*

Anſw. By waiting to feel it. There is ſomewhat of God near every man; which, his ſpirit retiring and waiting on the Lord, the Lord will give him to feel in the ſeaſons of his good pleaſure. For it is near man, not as a talent always to lie dead and buried, but to work in him, and bring him out of his own ſinful corrupt nature into its holy pure nature.

Queſt. 10. *How may a man feel and know the power of this life?*

Anſw. By its nature, properties, manner, and end of working in the heart. It enlightens the ſoul, it quickens to God, it draws the heart from that which is manifeſtly and ſenſibly evil without diſpute, it opens the eye to ſee and diſcern that which is holy and good, inflaming the mind with deſires after it. Now this is the appearance of the Holy One, who thus appears and begins to work, to draw the mind from that which is ſinful and deſtroyeth, to that which is holy and ſaveth. Happy, oh! happy is he who thus feels the drawing, quickening Spirit, and in faithfulneſs gives up thereto! for he (by the Spirit and power of life) ſhall feel Cain, the ſacrificer according to the fleſh, Iſhmael the ſeed of Abraham after the fleſh, Eſau the firſt birth, whoſe mind is in the earth: he ſhall feel theſe, I ſay, caſt out; and Abel the righteous ſeed, who lives and ſacrifices in the true faith; Iſaac the ſeed of promiſe, Jacob the wreſtler with God, in the power and ſtrength of his own Spirit, with the tears and ſupplications which are from his own life; he ſhall feel (I ſay) this nature, birth, and Spirit raiſed in him, and his ſoul in it living to God, and increaſing in union and fellowſhip with him.

Some QUESTIONS anſwered concerning BLASPHEMY and BLASPHEMERS.

Queſt. 1. *WHAT is blaſphemy?*

Anſw. It is the reproaching or ſpeaking ill of the truths or name of God, in any of their appearances, or of them whom he hath choſen to bear his name, or hold forth his truth. To reproach the name or truths of God, as they have been held forth in former ages, or as they are held forth in this age; or to ſpeak evil of the inſtrument he then choſe, or now chuſeth and maketh uſe of to hold them forth; this is blaſphemy: and the Lord will not hold him guiltleſs who ſo doth, whatſoever he be.

Queſt 2. *In which reſpect are men moſt liable to blaſphemy? Are they apteſt to reproach and ſpeak evil of God's truths, as they have been held forth in former*

ages, and the inſtruments by which God then held them forth? or are they apter to reproach and ſpeak evil of the truths of God, as they are held forth in their age, and the inſtruments and miniſters who then held them forth?

Anſw. Men are not ſo liable to blaſpheme the truths (or name) of God, as formerly held forth, or the meſſengers and miniſters of former ages, as the preſent truth and the preſent miniſtry.

Queſt. 3. *How cometh that about, or why is it ſo?*

Anſw. Becauſe the truths of former ages, and the miniſtry therein, have wrought through the deceit and oppoſition, which withſtood them in their day, and have left a good ſavour behind them; ſo that it would be hard and diſadvantageous to the evil ſpirit to endeavour to bring a reproach over them. If men ſhould go about to revile Moſes or the prophets of old, Chriſt or his apoſtles, who would give an ear to them? Surely very few, if any. But to cry up theſe and their doctrine, and to endeavour to make the preſent diſpenſation of truth appear to men, as if it were different from, and contrary to theſe (of another nature, of another ſpirit, tending to other ends, and towards the producing of other effects); this is a very ſubtil device, and an advantageous way of oppoſing the preſent truth and miniſtry with; and this way the enemy hath taken all along. Moſes in his day had enemies and reſiſters, but after his death we never hear him ſpoken againſt; but thoſe that withſtood the prophets in after-ages, would honour the remembrance of Moſes. In Chriſt's day they would honour both Moſes and the prophets; but Chriſt, and his diſciples and apoſtles, were reproached as blaſphemers and deceivers. After that age, Chriſt and his apoſtles were generally acknowledged, as well as Moſes and the prophets; but yet they that were in the ſame Spirit, in the ſame life, in the ſame nature, have afterwards ſtill been perſecuted and oppoſed by the preſent age.

Queſt. 4. *Who are the great blaſphemers in every age?*

Anſw. They which profeſs truth, but are not in the power and life of that which they profeſs; and among theſe, thoſe eſpecially who have had any taſte of the power: for if theſe turn from the power, which it pleaſed God to give them ſome taſte of, they are given up by God to deluſion, deviliſhneſs, ſubtilty, and enmity, above all others. For as the blaſphemy (which I am ſpeaking of) is above truth and the name of Chriſt, ſo it is chiefly to be found among thoſe who pretend to his name. Thoſe that have the outward name, knowledge, and talk about the name, about Chriſt, about the heavenly things; theſe blaſpheme and reproach thoſe who have and are in the thing itſelf, who dwell in heaven, and worſhip in the heavenly place, even in the true tabernacle which God hath pitched, and not man. Theſe bring their knowledge, wiſdom, ſcriptures, experiences, obſervations, and all that ever they can reap and rend, againſt the preſent power and life of truth.

Queſt.

Queſt. 5. *How come men, who pretend to truth, and to ſeek after it, to run into this grievous and dangerous blaſphemy?*

Anſw. By reaſon of their not being in that, which demonſtrateth the truth in the holy power and nature thereof. They want its light and demonſtration, and ſo underſtand things out of it; and in this their own miſunderſtanding turn againſt that, which ſhould enlighten, ſanctify, and preſerve them. Now, not being in that (but in another thing); not being in the true Spirit, in the true light, in the true knowledge, in the true ſenſe and underſtanding, they muſt needs err and misjudge; and the greater their knowledge, ability, wiſdom, and zeal is, the more deſperate and dangerous is their path of error, both to themſelves and others. Who erred ſo dangerouſly in that day, as the Scribes and Phariſees; which by their wiſdom, knowledge, and ſkill in the ſcriptures, would diſpute againſt Chriſt, prove he was not (he could not be) the Meſſiah, according to the ſcriptures (bidding men ſearch the ſcriptures, and ſee if any prophet came out of Galilee, *John* vii. 52.) judged him, who was indeed the holy one (who loved righteouſneſs, and hated iniquity) an unholy one, a ſinner and companion of ſinners, a blaſphemer, deceiver, *&c.*? And in the ſame ſpirit the ſtricter a man is, and the more he knows, and the more confident he is of his knowledge and ſkill in the ſcriptures, the more deſperately and dangerouſly will he venture to oppoſe the appearance of the Spirit and power of the Lord Jeſus in this day.

Queſt. 6. *How come they who have ſo much literal knowledge of ſcriptures, and have had a true ſenſe and experience (ſome of them) of the things of God, to be out of that which demonſtrateth the truth?*

Anſw. By their turning from it, and rejecting it. The Scribes and Phariſees rejected the counſel of God, againſt themſelves. There is but one thing can open the eyes, and the Scribes and Phariſees turned againſt it, believing that their eyes were opened already, by the light and knowledge which they had received from Moſes. *Moſes*, ſaid they, *we know God ſpeaks to; but as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is.* And juſt ſo is it now. Oh! that ye could read, whoſe ſtate it is!

Queſt. 7. *Why do they turn from it and reject it?*

Anſw. Becauſe it anſwers not their expectations. That appearance of Chriſt in fleſh in that day, did not anſwer the expectations of the Scribes and Phariſees. And this appearance of Chriſt in his Holy Spirit and power after the apoſtaſy, doth not anſwer the expectations of many now. And ſo, not appearing as what they look for, as what they have expected, according to their apprehenſions and underſtanding of the ſcriptures, they cannot (ſo ſtanding and believing) wait, but turn from it, and turn the ſcriptures againſt it, as the Scribes and Phariſees turned the ſcriptures againſt that appearance of Chriſt.

Now, Oh! that men, that have any deſires after truth, might not run into this kind of blaſphemy, and ſo thereby provoke and turn that Spirit

and power of life againſt them, which alone is able to ſave them. For the Spirit and power of the Lord turneth againſt the other ſpirit, in all its devices and transformings, and againſt them who are joined to that ſpirit. And as the eye of the Lord is chiefly upon his preſent miniſtration of truth in the preſent age to mind that, to bleſs that, to appear in that; ſo his Spirit moſt turneth againſt that which oppoſeth and ſeeketh to overturn it. Yea, little do men know what they have loſt from God, as to themſelves and their own ſtates; and what they are become in his ſight, by their oppoſing the preſent diſpenſation and miniſtration of truth; even as little do many know in this day, as the Scribes and Phariſees did, in their day, what they brought upon themſelves and others, whom they infected (by their falſe knowledge and wrong expounding and managing of the ſcriptures) with a prejudiced ſpirit againſt Chriſt.

The Lord did promiſe that he would become the Shepherd, and gather his ſheep himſelf, after the cloudy and dark day. He is come to ſeek out, to gather, to heal, to bind up, to comfort, to preſerve, *&c.* He is known, he is witneſſed, he is received; his life, virtue, healing and ſaving power is felt. Let men reproach and revile it ever ſo much, yet it is known to be the thing, the pearl, the ſeed of the kingdom, *&c.* Yea, and he that receiveth it, and is born of it, knoweth that he is of God, and hath the true nature of life, and true language from God; which that, which knoweth God, heareth; but that which is not of God, cannot hear.

A QUESTION concerning MIRACLES anſwered.

Queſt. *IF this be a new diſpenſation of the life and power of God, even of the preaching of the everlaſting goſpel again after the apoſtaſy, why is it not accompanied with outward miracles now, as formerly it was? I ſay* outward *miracles, becauſe it* is *accompanied with inward miracles. For the lame (that could never ſet ſtep in the path of life) do now walk; the eyes that were blind, are opened, and do now ſee; the ears that were deaf, have been unſtopped, and do now hear; the lepers inwardly (who were all overſpread with ſin and corruption) have been waſhed, cleanſed, and healed, by the pure power; yea, the dead inwardly have been quickened, raiſed, turned to him that lives for evermore, have received life from him, and do live in him and with him. Now theſe are mighty things, wonderful miracles, even the ſubſtance of the miracles which were wrought under the law, and which Chriſt himſelf wrought outwardly. For it was not the outward healing, which is ſalvation, life, and power chiefly aimed at therein; but to point men by that to the thing which was to work the inward; that they might take notice of it, know it, come to it, and wait upon it, to be made partakers*

takers of the inward health and ſalvation by it. Yet ſeeing in that day Chriſt did then pleaſe to put forth his power outwardly, to point to, and witneſs of, the inward, why doth he not do ſo now?

Anſw. The nature of the preſent diſpenſation doth not require it. For the preſent diſpenſation of life, is to bring men to the principle of life which is within them (which is the ſum and ſubſtance of all former diſpenſations); and to bring them to this, there doth not need any thing of a miraculous nature outwardly; but the witneſs, demonſtration and enlightening of the Spirit inwardly. Now when the outward law was to be received, then the Lord ſaw need of outward miracles to confirm it; ſo alſo in the prophets days, while that diſpenſation held, till towards the coming of Chriſt. And when Chriſt came, in the body prepared by the Father, it pleaſed the Lord to confirm (by outward viſible demonſtrations of his power in him) that this was he. Likewiſe afterwards, the apoſtles having the doctrine concerning that appearance to preach and teſtify to the world, the Lord was alſo pleaſed and ſaw good to confirm it by miracles. But now there is not any new doctrine to be preached. The doctrine concerning Chriſt is the ſame that it was, the very ſame that the apoſtles preached. Neither is there any need of confirming it now; for it is generally believed among profeſſors of all ſorts; as Chriſt's birth, preaching, living holily, dying (offering himſelf up as a ſacrifice for ſin), riſing, aſcending, ſitting at the right hand of the Father, who doubts of theſe things? But under all this knowledge men hide their ſins, their luſts, and corruptions, ſerving not the Lord (not truly fearing, believing in, and obeying him) but his enemies, and are become corrupt like unto the Heathen; being in words Chriſtians, but as to the holy converſation and power of the endleſs life, as far from it as the very Heathen. Therefore hath the Lord viſited the world in this ſtate, and ſent forth what he judged meet for it in this ſtate; to wit, not a miniſtry to preach over that doctrine, under which the Chriſtian world had corrupted themſelves; but to point to the principle of life, wherein is the light and power to diſcover, lead from and waſh away this corruption. And with this miniſtry there goeth a power, to reach the heart and raiſe the witneſs, in all that hear in fear, and in the ſenſe and dread of God; ſo that the witneſs preſently anſwers, and the mind is inwardly ſatisfied, knows the thing, and turns to it. Now this (and the effect of this) is beyond miracles, and the ſatisfaction or aſſurance which they can afford. For miracles leave a diſpute in the mind (notwithſtanding all the miracles Chriſt ſhewed, there was yet a diſpute and diſſatisfaction in the minds of many concerning him). But he that feels the thing itſelf in the true principle, where the demonſtration and certainty of the Spirit's aſſurance is received; he is paſt diſpute, and is gone a degree, in the nature of things, beyond that ſatisfaction which miracles can afford. He is out of that ſtate and mind which aſketh a ſign, or ſeeketh confirmation by a ſign. So that men ought to take heed how they expect or call for miracles now, as the Jews did to Chriſt:

Chriſt for a ſign of old; for that is not the temper of mind which this diſpenſation is to anſwer, but rather to draw men out from thence into a principle, into the new life and Spirit itſelf; where fuller demonſtrations (of a deeper nature) are given to the ſoul, than outward miracles are. Feel the power that is revealed, feel the life that is made manifeſt, let in the light of the day which ſhines; this will ſcatter the darkneſs from thee, and clear up the things of the day unto thee. The pure miniſtration of power, the pure miniſtration of life, the light of the everlaſting day is come. Oh! wait the opening of the eye that ſees it, and be conceived and brought forth in the womb of it.

Some further QUESTIONS anſwered, concerning the NEW COVENANT.

Queſt. 1. *WHAT were thoſe days, after which the New Covenant was to be made?*

Anſw. They were the days of the law and prophets, the days of the firſt covenant, the days of God's exerciſing and making trial of that outward people the Jews, by his outward and literal covenant. After the full expiring of thoſe days, another covenant was to be made.

Queſt. 2. *What are the days wherein the new covenant is made?*

Anſw. They are the days of Chriſt, the days of his power, the days of the miniſtration of his Spirit.

Queſt. 3. *What is the houſe of Iſrael and Judah, with which this new covenant is to be made? Is it the Iſrael and Judah according to the fleſh? The Iſrael and Judah according to the old covenant; or according to the new?*

Anſw. When the old covenant is paſſed away, the conſideration of Iſrael and Judah (after the fleſh) paſſed away alſo; and the new covenant is fitted for, and made with, the new Iſrael and Judah; ſo that, as the apoſtle ſaid, *He is not* (now, according to this covenant) *a Jew, that is one outward; nor is that circumciſion, which is outward in the fleſh; but he is a Jew, which is one inward*, &c. The goſpel breaks down the outward conſideration between Jew and Gentile, and brings up another conſideration in both; ſo that the promiſes and bleſſings are not to either in their old ſtate, but as they are gathered into, and ſpring up in, the new ſeed.

Queſt. 4. *Is this covenant faultleſs? Doth it mend that which God found amiſs in the other? Doth it keep more firmly to him than the other did? Is there no falling away from it?*

Anſw. Yes, it is faultleſs, it doth help the defects of the other. It doth keep more firmly to God. There is no falling away from it, by thoſe with whom

whom it is fully made, and who are eſtabliſhed in it. But in the paſſage and travel, there is danger to the ſoul which is not faithful and watchful, leſt it be drawn from that which gives it right to, and entrance into, the covenant. For as the beginning is in the faith, and in the obedience; ſo is the continuance, growth, and progreſs. Thus the goſpel was preached, *He that believeth, and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved*; which believing includes not only a beginning to believe, but a going on therein, and continuing to the end. For ſo is the promiſe and word of Chriſt, *He that continueth to the end ſhall be ſaved.* But if any man draw back from the Lord, from his Spirit, and return into the way of death with the other ſpirit, the ſoul of the Lord will have no pleaſure in him.

Object. *But then this alſo is like the firſt covenant, depending upon the creature, and is defective as the other was.*

Anſw. No; this covenant doth not depend upon the creature: but upon God's love, mercy, and power, which hath no limits in this covenant, but may extend itſelf as far and as long as it pleaſeth. It dependeth upon the principle of his life, upon the power of his Spirit freely diſpenſed to the creature; yet the creature that will reap and enjoy this, muſt come to it in the faith and power which is of the principle, and in the ſame muſt abide with it. For God forceth none to come, but draweth and maketh willing; neither doth he force any to ſtay, but perſuadeth and maketh willing to ſtay. This is the manner of his working in the day of his power. But now, if the ſoul hearken to the other ſpirit, and his drawings, and depart from the Lord, and will not hearken and be won again, the love and pleaſure of the Lord turns from it, even according to the law of this covenant. For there is a law of this covenant, according to the nature of it (according to which the Lord works) as well as there was in the other.

Now ſearch ye the ſcriptures concerning this thing. Is there any promiſe of ſalvation, but upon coming to the Son; or to them that come, without abiding? Did not Chriſt tell his own diſciples, that as they were in the vine, in his love, ſo they muſt abide there? It was the law his Father gave him, and the ſame law he giveth them. It is natural to man to backſlide; and in his backſliding from that wherein is the life and virtue, how can he but miſs of the life and virtue of it? Therefore, in this covenant, the Lord hath provided that which will heal the backſlidings, which will work out all in man freely, which will powerfully preſerve him, *&c.* But he muſt come to it (he muſt come to the Son, he muſt come to the waters) and he muſt alſo abide there. Yet this is not required of him to do of himſelf neither, according to the law and courſe of the old covenant; but of him in the new ability, which is in the new principle of life, wherein he is daily to receive it: yea, it is with him, and near him; as near him to be daily drawing him into, and preſerving him in life, and within the limits of the covenant, as the tempter is to be drawing him into ſinning againſt the covenant, and ſo into death.

Queſt.

Queſt. 4. *What doth God promiſe to do for the new houſe of Iſrael and Judah in this new covenant?*

Anſw. He promiſeth to put his laws into their mind, and to write them in their hearts. (Oh! happy he that knoweth theſe laws, this mind, this heart, this manner of writing!) He promiſeth to be their God, and that they ſhall be his people. (This covenant is a powerful covenant; it will make ſo indeed!) He promiſeth to become their teacher, and ſuch a teacher as all ſhall know him, from the leaſt to the greateſt, even ſo as they ſhall not need to ſeek out abroad after the knowledge of him. (It is ſo where this covenant is made, even with the leaſt with whom it is compleated; but it is not ſo where it is only begun, or in ſome few degrees carried on). He promiſeth to take away that which alone is able to hinder the good things of the covenant; for he will be merciful to their unrighteouſneſs, and their ſins and iniquities will he remember no more. This alſo is witneſſed according to the ſoul's growth in, and receiving into it the ſtrength of the covenant. For many find ſinning againſt the covenant, and the remembering of their iniquities in their paſſage; yea, judgment doth continue in the refining time, till that be made to paſs away thereby which the judgment is to; but in the covenant itſelf is reſt, joy, peace, ſatisfaction, life, and powerful redemption and righteouſneſs for evermore.

Queſt. 5. *How is this covenant made, and how doth the ſoul enter into it, grow up in it, and reap and enjoy the ſweet bleſſings and promiſes of it?*

Anſw. It is made in the faith and obedience of the ſoul to the goſpel, to the power of the endleſs life. It is made according to the promiſe. The promiſe is to him that believes and obeys the goſpel. There is no other way in it but union with Chriſt in the faith, from which flows obedience to the holy commands and requirings of his Spirit. All unbelief and diſobedience is out of this holy bleſſed covenant. They are ſtops in the way, and hinder the ſoul both from entering into, and from abiding in, the covenant; yea, the gates of hell may eaſily prevail againſt them who do not believe, obey, watch and pray, but enter into the temptations of the enemy, which draw into death, as the motions and requirings of the Spirit lead into life.

A brief Account concerning Silent Meetings; the Nature, Uſe, Intent, and Benefit of them.

THIS is a great myſtery, hid from the eye of man, who is run from the inward life into outward obſervations. He cannot ſee either that this is required by the Lord of his people, or any edification therein, or benefit thereby; but to the mind that is drawn inward the thing is plain; and the building up hereby in the life of God, and fellowſhip one with another

another therein, is ſweetly felt; and precious refreſhment from the preſence of the Lord received by them, who ſingly herein wait upon him according to the leadings and requirings of his Holy Spirit. Now to open the thing a little to the upright-hearted, if the Lord pleaſe.

After the mind is in ſome meaſure turned to the Lord, his quickenings felt, his ſeed beginning to ariſe and ſpring up in the heart, then the fleſh is to be ſilent before him, and the ſoul to wait upon him (and for his further appearings) in that meaſure of life which is already revealed. Now this is a great thing to know fleſh ſilenced, to feel the reaſoning thoughts and diſcourſes of the fleſhly mind ſtilled, and the wiſdom, light, and guidance of God's Spirit waited for. For man is to come into the poverty of ſelf, into the abaſedneſs, into the nothingneſs, into the ſilence of his ſpirit before the Lord; into the putting off of all his knowledge, wiſdom, underſtanding, abilities, all that he is, hath done, or can do, out of this meaſure of life, into which he is to travel, that he may be cloathed and filled with the nature, Spirit, and power of the Lord.

Now in this meaſure of life which is of Chriſt (and in which Chriſt is, and appears to the ſoul) there is the power of life and death; power to kill to the fleſh, and power to quicken to God; power to cauſe the ſoul to ceaſe from its own workings, and power to work in and for the ſoul what God requires, and what is acceptable in his ſight. And in this God is to be waited upon and worſhipped continually (both in private and in publick) according as his Spirit draws and teaches.

For the Lord requireth of his people not only to worſhip him apart, but to meet together to worſhip him, in the ſeaſons, and according to the drawings, of his Spirit: and they that are taught of him, dare not forſake the aſſembling of themſelves together, as the manner of ſome is; but watch againſt the temptations and ſnares, which the enemy lays to deceive them therefrom, and to diſturb their ſenſe by, that they might not feel the drawings of the Father thereunto.

And this is the manner of their worſhip. They are to wait upon the Lord, to meet in the ſilence of fleſh, and to watch for the ſtirrings of his life, and the breakings forth of his power amongſt them. And in the breakings forth of that power they may pray, ſpeak, exhort, rebuke, ſing, or mourn, *&c.* according as the Spirit teaches, requires, and gives utterance. But if the Spirit do not require to ſpeak, and give to utter, then every one is to ſit ſtill in his place (in his heavenly place I mean) feeling his own meaſure, feeding thereupon, receiving therefrom (into his ſpirit) what the Lord giveth. Now in this is edifying, pure edifying, precious edifying; his ſoul who thus waits, is hereby particularly edified by the Spirit of the Lord at every meeting. And then alſo there is the life of the whole felt in every veſſel that is turned to its meaſure; inſomuch as the warmth of life in each veſſel doth not only warm the particular, but they are like an heap of freſh and living coals, warming one another, inſomuch as a great ſtrength, freſhneſs, and vigour of life flows into all. And if any be burthened, tempted, buffetted by Satan, bowed down, over-

borne, languiſhing, afflicted, diſtreſſed, &c. the eſtate of ſuch is felt in Spirit and ſecret cries, or open (as the Lord pleaſeth) aſcend up to the Lord for them, and they many times find eaſe and relief, in a few words ſpoken, or without words, if it be the ſeaſon of their help and relief with the Lord.

For abſolutely ſilent meetings (wherein there is a reſolution not to ſpeak) we know not; but we wait on the Lord, either to feel him in words, or in ſilence of ſpirit without words, as he pleaſeth. And that which we aim at, and are inſtructed to by the Spirit of the Lord as to ſilent meetings, is that the fleſh in every one be kept ſilent, and that there be no building up, but in the Spirit and power of the Lord.

Now there are ſeveral ſtates of people: ſome feel little of the Lord's preſence, but feel temptations and thoughts, with many wanderings and rovings of mind. Theſe are not yet acquainted with the power, or at leaſt know not its dominion, but rather feel dominion of the evil over the good in them. And this is a ſore travailing and mournful ſtate, and meetings to ſuch as theſe (many times) may ſeem to themſelves rather for the worſe than for the better. Yet even theſe, turning, as much as may be, from ſuch things, and cleaving (or at leaſt in truth of heart deſiring to cleave) to that which diſliketh or witneſſeth againſt them, have acceptance with the Lord herein: and continuing to wait in this trouble and diſtreſs (keeping cloſe to meetings, in fear and ſubjection to the Lord who requireth it, tho' with little appearing benefit), do reap an hidden benefit at preſent, and ſhall reap a more clear and manifeſt benefit afterwards, as the Lord waſteth and weareth out that in them, wherein the darkneſs hath its ſtrength. Now to evidence that the Lord doth require theſe ſilent meetings, or meetings after this manner ſilent, it may thus appear.

God is to be worſhipped in ſpirit, in his own power and life, and this is at his own diſpoſe. His church is a gathering in the Spirit. If any man ſpeak there, he muſt ſpeak as the oracle of God, as the veſſel out of which God ſpeaks; as the trumpet out of which he gives the ſound. Therefore there is to be a waiting in ſilence, till the Spirit of the Lord move to ſpeak, and alſo give words to ſpeak. For a man is not to ſpeak his own words, or in his own wiſdom or time; but the Spirit's words, in the Spirit's wiſdom and time, which is when he moves and gives to ſpeak. And ſeeing the Spirit inwardly nouriſheth, when he giveth not to ſpeak words, the inward ſenſe and nouriſhment is to be waited for, and received as it was given when there are no words. Yea, the miniſtry of the Spirit and life is more cloſe and immediate when without words, than when with words, as has been often felt, and is faithfully teſtified by many witneſſes. Eye hath not ſeen nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, how and what things God reveals to his children by his Spirit, when they wait upon him in his pure fear, and worſhip and converſe with him in ſpirit; for then the fountain of the great deep is unſealed, and the everlaſting ſprings ſurely give up the pure and living water.

LIFE

LIFE and IMMORTALITY

Brought to LIGHT through the

GOSPEL.

BEING A TRUE

DISCOVERY

OF THE

NATURE and GROUND

OF THE

RELIGION and KINGDOM of CHRIST;

IN SEVERAL

WEIGHTY QUERIES, Propounded;

AND OTHER

SERIOUS MATTERS treated of,

Highly importing the

ETERNAL SALVATION of SOULS.

WRITTEN BY

ISAAC PENINGTON,

In the Time of his IMPRISONMENT in READING GOAL.

THE PREFACE.

THE goſpel is the power of God unto ſalvation. Oh! bleſſed is he, who meets with that which powerfully ſaves! Moſt mens religion is but a talk and profeſſion of that which they have not; and what will ſuch a kind of religion avail, when it comes to be tried by the piercing fire of the Spirit of burning, and pure (impartial) judgment. Neither circumciſion availeth any thing, nor uncircumciſion, but a new creature. Alas! how few know that! And yet if any man be in Chriſt, he is a new creature; old things are paſſed away, and all things become new there. Who can bear the deciſion of this trial? For many pretend to be in Chriſt, and yet they themſelves are ſtill in the old nature and ſpirit. Be not deceived, ſaith the apoſtle, God is not mocked. Alas! how many are deceived about their religion! Indeed it is impoſſible for a man not to be deceived, who knoweth not the anointing, nor is taught his religion by the anointing. He is truth and no lye, and he teacheth truth and no lye; but mens apprehenſions and conceivings upon the holy ſcriptures and myſteries of God's kingdom, are but like themſelves, empty and vain. Oh! that men could ſee with the true eye, hear with the true ear, underſtand with the true heart! Then might they know indeed, and come to witneſs the Ethiopian ſkin waſhed, and the leopard ſpots changed; but till then, they may change from one opinion to another; and from one profeſſion and way of religion to another, and yet in nature, ſpirit, mind, and heart, yea, and in converſation alſo (as to the ſubſtance thereof), remain ſtill one and the ſame. And what will become of men, whoſe hope is in their religion, in their knowledge of Chriſt, in their faith, in their worſhip, &c. if all theſe, when they come to be tried, ſhall be found wanting of the true nature and virtue, and condemned by the Lord for dead and dry! Oh! that men knew what ſhould be yoked down, what ſhould be turned from and denied, how glorioufly and takingly ſoever it appears! All fleſh is graſs; all fleſhly knowledge and religion muſt paſs away. That which the earthly man can comprehend in his underſtanding, is but the outward, the fleſhly part of religion; the ſpiritual knowledge, the living knowledge, is reſerved for, and given to, the ſpiritual capacity and underſtanding, which the children of the Moſt High received in the new birth, and holy begettings of life.

Here

Here are ſome queries, held forth in love to thee, reader, to bring thee to a true ſenſe in many weighty matters. They are not of a confounding (unleſs it be to that part which is not to know), but of an opening nature; they were ſweet to my taſte, which (as in God's preſence, and by the virtue of his life and Spirit flowing in me) reliſhed the things queried of. I deſire they may be profitable to thee alſo, and that thou mayeſt witneſs the guidance of God's Spirit, leading thee into, and giving thee faithfully to walk in, the way that leads to eternal reſt. For our days in this world are but for a moment, and then we muſt be judged, and diſpoſed of by the Lord, for ever; each perſon according to the nature and ſpirit he is of, and according to the deeds done in the body, whether they have been good or evil. The Lord give thee ſo to conſider thy ways, that thou mayeſt apply thy heart to true wiſdom; which conſiſts in fearing of God, and departing from evil; which the leaſt child, that is taught of God, learns; and thoſe that are grown up in holineſs and righteouſneſs, are ſkilful and perfect in; ſo that they cannot do any thing againſt the truth, but in and for the truth.

There are alſo ſome queſtions anſwered; one about preaching the goſpel after the apoſtaſy, another about the reaſon of God's not teaching others what it pleaſeth him to teach us; and the way of his teaching us. There is likewiſe ſomewhat concerning the threefold appearance of Chriſt, and touching Mount Sinai, from whence the law of the letter was given; and Mount Sion, from whence the law of the Spirit goes forth; as likewiſe concerning the temple and ſacrifices under the goſpel, and of the way to know one's election, and to obtain full aſſurance thereof, *&c.* All theſe ſprang from life in my heart, for thy ſake who breatheſt after the Lord, and after his pure way and holy path of life, and who readeſt in humility, fear, and uprightneſs; and my prayers to the God of my life go along with them, that thy heart may be opened by him, in the reading of them, and that thou mayeſt have the ſenſe of them in the ſhinings of his light in thine own heart, whoſe work it is to cauſe it to ſhine out of the darkneſs; that his glorious goſpel may not be hid from the ſons of men; but, through the virtue, power, and operation of the Spirit of truth (which firſt convinceth of ſin, and then leadeth out of it, into that which is pure and holy) they may come to be acquainted with the myſtery of life, which hath been hid from ages and generations, but is now made manifeſt to God's children and ſanctified ones; which being made manifeſt to them, is revealed and known to be Chriſt in them, the hope of glory. The Lord grant thou mayeſt know and experience him to be ſo to thee and in thee, *Amen.*

A FEW WORDS in GENERAL,

To thoſe that Deſire the

KNOWLEDGE of the TRUE GOD.

The Inſpiration of the Almighty giveth Underſtanding.
We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an Underſtanding, that we may know him that is True.

IT is a great matter to receive an underſtanding from the Lord; which until a man doth, his knowledge is neither true, living, nor ſaving.

Now, he that would receive an underſtanding from the Lord, muſt wait to know the beginnings of the new and holy underſtanding; and what that underſtanding and knowledge is, which ſtands in the way thereof, and how to part therewith: and then he muſt faithfully loſe and part with it for the other; which is pure, true, and heavenly.

And when a man hath received an underſtanding from the Lord, then he may weigh, conſider, and come to know things aright: but till then, deceit will lodge in his heart, and have power over him; and his very wiſdom and knowledge will pervert him, and turn him aſide from the way of life and truth. The wiſe profeſſing Jews were hindered from owning the Meſſiah, by the very knowledge which they had gathered and comprehended out of the letter of the ſcriptures.

But if a man hath received an underſtanding from the Lord in meaſure, yet it is an hard matter to keep to that underſtanding; and he muſt lie very low and humble, who ſo doth. Oh! what a continual watch hath my ſoul had (and ſtill hath) againſt that part wherein my religion formerly ſtood! For though the Lord had reached to the pure ſeed of life in me, and had quickened my ſoul thereby; yet I knew not how to turn to the ſeed, and abide in the ſeed, and to hold my knowledge and life there; but was ſtill ſtriving to live and know (and comprehend and practiſe) in a part above the ſeed; and the enemy was ſtill too hard for me, and did often deprive me of the benefit or right uſe of what the Lord had wrought in me, and freely beſtowed upon me.

Alas!

Alas! who can underſtand this voice! Surely it is very hard for any ſo to do, but ſuch who have had ſome ſenſible and lively experience thereof in themſelves; but for want of this knowledge, ſenſe, and experience, many are deeply deceived concerning the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the ſtate of their own ſouls, concerning faith in him, love to him, pardon of ſin and juſtification in and through him; regeneration and ſanctification by his Spirit; and concerning walking in the way of holineſs, and obeying his commands; and ſo err in heart exceedingly (both in doctrine and practice) concerning the weighty things which appertain to ſalvation.

Now I having erred in time paſt in my former profeſſions, and been deeply perplexed and diſtreſſed, through my erring from the holy ſeed, Spirit, and power of life; bear with me! bear with me! yea I ſay again, bear with me, if I pity others, and ſincerely deſire that their eyes may be opened to ſee the pure, living, holy, undefiled way, in which no defiled ſpirit can walk; but a man muſt be truly made alive, and truly cleanſed in mind and ſpirit, before he can walk in this way. Now, if we experimentally, moſt tenderly, and in true love, witneſs, from the God of life and ſalvation, where the life of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the cleanſing of his blood and Spirit is met with, and that according to the plain teſtimony of the ſcriptures, why are ye offended with us for our love, and for telling you the truth, as the Lord hath opened our eyes, and taught us to ſee and read it in the ſcriptures of truth, and as we have experimentally found it in Jeſus?

Well! the Lord knoweth how we are many times mourning and praying for you, while ye are reviling and backbiting us; for we know the way and courſe of that ſpirit wherein ye oppoſe us. And, oh! that ye yourſelves alſo did know what ſpirit it is, which thus acts you! For then, ſurely, ye would confeſs it to be the very ſame which oppoſed Chriſt in the days of his fleſh, having only a different cover and way of appearance; that, crying him up as to come; this, as already come; but both denying him who is the Meſſiah. For in that ye deny his Spirit, life, appearance and power in the leaſt of his, ye deny him. Oh! that ye could feel the tender bowels, truth of heart, and true underſtanding from God's Holy Spirit, wherein this is written! Oh! that ye could rightly diſtinguiſh between the precious and the vile; and not call that vile, which in God's ſight is precious; nor that precious, which in God's ſight is vile. Ye muſt feel the holy ſeed, the living of God, judge in you; and ye judge only in that, or ye will err in judging according to the appearance, and not judge the righteous judgment.

Reading Goal, 26th of the Third Month, 1671.

I. P.

LIFE and IMMORTALITY

Brought to Light by the

GOSPEL:

BEING

A true Diſcovery of the NATURE and GROUND of the RELIGION and KINGDOM of CHRIST, *&c.*

I.

Some Queries concerning the State of the Church as it was in the Apoſtles Days, and was to be afterwards.

Query 1. WAS not the church exceeding beautiful, and in heavenly glory, in the days of the apoſtles? Did ſhe only travail after life and glory? Did ſhe not alſo bring forth? Did ſhe not witneſs the kingdom come, the power come, the eternal life come? And did ſhe not partake thereof, and dwell therein? Was ſhe not a woman cloathed with the ſun, and the moon under her feet, and crowned with a crown of twelve ſtars? Yea, did ſhe not bring forth the man-child, which was to rule all nations with a rod of iron? Who can read this ſtate, who is not in ſome meaſure a partaker of the ſame glory?

Query 2. Was not this heaven afterwards wrapped up, rolled up; and did not this glory paſs away? Did not the great red dragon fight with the woman? And did ſhe not fly into the wilderneſs, and was not the man-child caught up to God? And did not the remnant of her ſeed (who had the teſtimony of Jeſus, and who kept his commandments) teſtify and propheſy in ſackcloth? Read the xith and xiith chapters of the *Revelations*.

Query 3. Upon the flight of the true church into the wilderneſs (when ſhe was thus gone out of ſight) did not the falſe church ſtart up; which made a glorious and taking appearance in the world, to the eye of man's wiſdom? Did not ſhe ſit upon a ſcarlet-coloured beaſt (wiſe and ſtrong) having ſeven heads,

heads, and ten horns? Was ſhe not arrayed in purple and ſcarlet colour, and decked with gold, and precious ſtones, and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand, making the kings, nations, and inhabitants of the earth drunk with the wine of her fornication? What do thoſe things mean? What did the wiſdom of God thus deſcribe her for?

Query 4. What did the true church carry into the wilderneſs with her, and what did ſhe leave behind her? Did not the temple, the altar, and the true worſhippers go along with her? Did not the Gentiles, ſuch as were not true Jews, ſuch as could not come into the temple (but only into the outward court, and worſhip there), did not theſe ſtay behind? And had not theſe Gentiles henceforth (from the true church's flight into the wilderneſs) the outward court given to them, that they might make uſe of it (and worſhip in it) as much as they would? The virtue, the life, the power, the Spirit being taken away, and removed with the true church, which fled into the wilderneſs, what did God regard the outward? *Leave it out of my meaſure*, ſaith the Lord, *and give it to the Gentiles*, Rev. xi. 2.

Query 5. What is the cup, the golden cup, which this falſe church hath in her hand, wherein are ſorceries and witchcrafts, wherewith ſhe bewitcheth people, and maketh them drunk? Is it not a glorious appearance of things without the true life and power? Doctrines concerning God, doctrines concerning Chriſt, doctrines concerning worſhip, doctrines concerning ſanctity, &c. Yea; but the Spirit, the life, the power, that was in the apoſtles days, is wanting. What remains of theſe is to be found with the true church in the wilderneſs (the blood of whoſe ſeed ſhe drinks) not with her.

Query 6. What will become of this great woman in the end; this rich, this glorious church? Shall ſhe continue for ever? Shall ſhe ſit as a queen for ever, and never ſee ſorrow? Shall the true church never come out of the wilderneſs, to be reſtored to her beauty and glory again? Nay, nay; in one day ſhall her plagues come; death, and mourning, and famine. It is true, ſhe is wiſe and ſtrong (and the beaſt alſo, on which ſhe ſits and rides, who is able to make war with? ſaith man's wiſdom); but wiſer and ſtronger is the Lord God Almighty, who judgeth her, and who is taking and will take to him his great power, wherewith he will thunder againſt her, until he hath brought her down, and her fleſh be utterly burnt with fire.

Query 7. What ſhall become of thoſe who drink of her cup, and who believe and worſhip as ſhe teacheth? Shall they not all drink of the wine of the cup of the wrath of God Almighty, poured out without mixture? Shall they not partake of her dreadful plagues, in the hour of her judgment? Read *Rev.* xiv. 9, 10, 11. and *chap.* xviii. For theſe things are to come to paſs as certainly as they were foretold; and when they do come to paſs, bleſſed ſhall the ſaints be who have ſuffered with patience, keeping the commandments and the faith of Jeſus; and woe will be to them who have perſecuted them, and drunk their blood. Read the xiiith, xivth, xviith, and xixth chapters of the *Revelations*, which ſignify of, and teſtify to, theſe things.

Now whereas many ſay, that the book of the *Revelations* is ſuch a myſtical book, that it is not to be underſtood; to what end then was it written? It was the revelation of Jeſus Chriſt, which God gave unto him, to ſhew unto his ſervants things which muſt ſhortly come to paſs, *chap.* i. 1. and would Chriſt give them forth in ſuch words as could not be underſtood? Again it is ſaid, *ver.* 5. Bleſſed is he that readeth, and they *that hear the words of this prophecy*, and keep thoſe things which are *written therein*; for the *time is at hand.* How can any be bleſſed in reading, or how can any keep what is written therein, without underſtanding the things contained in it? How can any follow the true church into the wilderneſs, or avoid being taken with the golden cup of fornications of the falſe church, or refuſe the mark of the beaſt (that he take it neither on his forehead nor hand, nor have the name of the beaſt upon him, nor ſo much as the number of his name) unleſs he truly and rightly underſtand theſe warnings and deſcriptions of the Holy Spirit of God, given forth in the book, to preſerve in the way of truth, in the way of life (tho' thro' great ſufferings and tribulations) out of the way of ſpiritual whoredom and death? For myſtical Babylon, the nations of the earth and great-ones (generally) commit fornication with, *Rev.* xvii. 2. and xviii. 3. Indeed this book is a myſtery to man's wiſdom; for it was not given to the wiſdom of this world, but is hid from that; but God gave it Chriſt to give to his ſervants; and it is not a myſtery (but opened and revealed by the Father's Spirit) to the children of the true wiſdom, who are inſtructed and taught of God to eſcape the bed of whoredom and ſpiritual fornication, which the earthly wiſdom (in the wiſeſt men of this world) is intangled in.

II.

Some Queries on Chap. xxix, *and* xxx. *of* Deut. *compared with* Rom. x.

Query 1. DID not God command Moſes to make a covenant with the children of Iſrael in the Land of Moab, beſides the covenant he made with them in Horeb? *Deut.* xxix. 1.

Queſt. 2. What was this covenant? Was it of the ſame nature with the former, or was it of a different nature? Was not the former the covenant of the law? And was not this the covenant of the goſpel? Did not this covenant contain the promiſe of circumciſing the heart? *Deut.* xxx. 6. Whereas, under the other covenant, notwithſtanding all the temptations, ſigns, and miracles which they had ſeen in Egypt, and in the wilderneſs, about the ſpace of forty years; yet the Lord had not given them an heart to perceive, and eyes to ſee, and ears to hear, unto that day. But Moſes and Aaron, with Caleb and Joſhua, who knew and partook of the other covenant

nant, they were of a better ſpirit, and underſtood the leadings and commands of God, and followed after him.

Query 3. Had the Jews minded this covenant, might they not have been able to keep the other alſo? Did any fail in ſacrifices, or outward obedience to the law, who kept to this covenant? What an holy man was Samuel, who did not ſo much as err in government, but could plead with the people, Whoſe ox or aſs have I taken, or whom have I defrauded or oppreſſed? Zacharias, and Elizabeth his wife, walked in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameleſs. And ſo the children of God in the goſpel, who have a new heart, and a new ſpirit, and walk not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit and law of life in Chriſt Jeſus, they alſo fulfil the righteouſneſs of the law declared in the Letter, *Rom.* viii. 4.

Query 4. What is the commandment of this covenant, and where is it written? The commandments of the other covenant are written in the law of Moſes, and in tables of ſtone; but where is this commandment written, or where is it to be found? Is it in heaven above, to be fetched down from thence; or is it beyond the ſea? *&c.* Nay, is it not very nigh? Is not the Word of this commandment nigh in the mouth and in the heart? And is it not there placed by the Lord for this very end, that men might hear it and do it?

Query 5. Was not this the Word or commandment of life and good, or of death and evil to the Jews? (See *chap.* xxx. 14, 15.) And is it not ſo alſo to mankind? He that hears and obeys the word of this commandment, doth he not live and partake of good? He that diſobeys it, doth he not die, and undergo wrath and evil, tribulation and anguiſh upon his ſoul from the hand of the Lord, either poured out upon him at preſent, or treaſured up for him againſt hereafter? Read *Rom.* ii. 5, 6, *&c.*

Query 6. Was not this other covenant, this ſecond covenant, this new covenant, which God bid Moſes make with them then, the ſame which God makes with believers in the days of the goſpel? The old covenant had been made with the Jews before; was not this the new? They had had the law in the letter before, wherein the commandment was afar off; but is not the commandment of the new covenant (the law of the Spirit of life) nigh? And had not the people of the Jews the Spirit of the Lord nigh to inſtruct them, by virtue of this covenant? That they had ſo, is plain, *Nehem.* ix. 20. and *Iſai.* lxiii. 10.; but whether they had the Spirit nigh to them by virtue of the old covenant, or by virtue of the new (which Moſes was appointed by God to make with them, as is afore expreſſed) let the wiſe in heart conſider. And whether the tender mercies which God all along expreſſed to them (as is mentioned *Iſai.* lxiii. 7.) were by virtue of that covenant wherein God had continual advantages and provocations againſt them, or by virtue of this covenant, from which mercy and redemption is continually ſpringing freely towards the Iſrael of God?

Query 7. Whether the Word of faith which the apoſtles preached, was not the ſame Word nigh in the mouth and heart which Moſes preached? Is not the Word of life, the Word of faith, the Word of the new covenant, one and the ſame thing in all ages and generations? Indeed there are outward ſayings and teſtimonies after divers manners; but Chriſt is the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever. And the commandment of life in the mouth and heart changeth not, but is always one and the ſame.

Query 8. What is the juſtification under this covenant; or what is that which God hath an eye to in juſtifying any perſon here? Is it not the obedience of faith? What doth God condemn but unbelief? And will he not juſtify faith? For faith flows from life, and life from Chriſt. So that indeed here the holy root makes all that are of it holy, and the righteous root makes all that are of it righteous; and he that doth righteouſneſs is righteous, even as he is righteous, 1 *John* iii. 7. And Chriſt is here indeed made unto the ſoul that thus receives him and obeys him as the Word and commandment of life: I ſay, he is indeed made unto ſuch an one of God wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption; and bleſſed are they that do not miſtake about this, but come truly to witneſs it.

III.

Some Queries concerning Deſtruction and Salvation.

Query 1. WHETHER there be not ſomewhat which deſtroys, which hath the nature of death and deſtruction in it, and which leaveneth with death and deſtruction, as it is let in and received?

Query 2. Whether there be not ſomewhat alſo which ſaves, which hath the nature of life and ſalvation in it, and which leaveneth with life and ſalvation, as it is let in and received?

Query 3. Whether that which deſtroys be not near, and whether that which ſaves be not near alſo? (Doth not Chriſt ſtand at the door and knock? And may not he be heard and let in? See *Rev.* iii. 20.).

Query 4. Whether this, which is ſo near, and ſo able to ſave, was not that which ſaved in all ages and generations, even before Chriſt appeared in a body of fleſh, and the ſhedding his blood?

Query 5. Whether, after Chriſt appeared in a body of fleſh, and ſhedding his blood, any can be ſaved thereby; or by any believing on Chriſt whatſoever; without letting in or receiving that life and power which ſaves? Be not deceived; God is not mocked. He that believeth in the power which raiſed our Lord Jeſus Chriſt from the dead, and is ſubject to the power, ſhall be redeemed and ſaved thereby. For death came by the ſoul's ſeparation from the power which gave life, and Chriſt ſaves by bringing to the power again (ſo that he that would indeed be ſaved by Chriſt, muſt believe in God through him, and feel the power which redeems). But let a man believe

believe ever ſo much concerning God and Chriſt, until he feel this, and be changed by the virtue and operation of this, he cannot be ſaved, but is ſtill in his ſins, and under condemnation and wrath, becauſe of ſin, whatever he thinks of himſelf.

Query 6. Whether Chriſt was not the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever; even before he took up the body of fleſh, while he was in the body, after he laid down the body, and after he took it up again and appeared in it to his diſciples?

Query 7. Whether Chriſt, where he inwardly and ſpiritually appears and is received, doth not diſcover, ſhake, diſſettle, and remove that nature, which cannot receive the law, and ſo bring up and bring forth the heavenly ſeed, which was afore the law (which is appointed by God for a generation to himſelf) which always doth the will of him who quickens it, and who fills it with life and power from on high?

IV.

Some Queries on COLOSS. i. 27, 28, 29. *(Obſerve that in* ver. 27. *whereas it is in our common Tranſlation rendered, This Myſtery* among *the Gentiles; it is in ſome other Tranſlations rendered, This Myſtery* in *the Gentiles; and ſo it is in the Greek.)*

Query 1. WHETHER there be not a myſtery of light, a myſtery of life; ſomewhat of true light hidden, ſomewhat of true life hidden in the Gentiles? Whatſoever makes manifeſt, is light, ſaith the apoſtle, *Epheſ.* v. 13, 14. And that which may be known of God, is manifeſt in them, *Rom.* i. Is there not ſomewhat in the Gentiles, which in ſome meaſure diſcovers ſomewhat contrary to God in them, and is many times working in their minds againſt it? Is not this of a precious nature? and hath it not precious virtue and power in it, though it be little took notice of by them?

Query 2. Do not the ſaints know what this myſtery is? Do they not know what is the riches and glory of it? Indeed it hath been hid from ages and generations, ſo that they knew it not; but is it hid from the ſaints alſo in the day of the goſpel? is it not revealed in them and to them?

Query 3. What is this myſtery in them in whom it is revealed? Is it not Chriſt in them? Is it not the hope of glory in them? Do they not know it to be Chriſt? Do they not know it to be the hope of glory? Who can damp the faith, or darken the knowledge, of thoſe who feel the myſtery of life revealed in them? who feel Chriſt (the hope of glory) living, dwelling, and reigning in the authority and power of the Father, in their own hearts?

Query 4. Did not the apoſtles preach this myſtery? Did they not preach the word of faith within in the heart? the kingdom within? Chriſt, the

hope

hope of glory within? Did they not preach this meſſage of the goſpel (which they had from Chriſt to carry to men) that *God is Light, and in him is no darkneſs at all?* And did they not preach it to this very end, to turn men, and bring men from the darkneſs within to the light within? that in it they might have union and fellowſhip with God, who is Light. Can any have fellowſhip with God, who is Light, but as his ſpirit is brought out of the inward darkneſs into the inward light?

Query 5. What did the apoſtle Paul, and the other apoſtles aim at, in their warning men and teaching them in all wiſdom? Was it not to perfect the work of God in them, and that they might preſent every man perfect in Chriſt Jeſus?

Query 6. Did not the grace and power of God go along with the apoſtles, and work in them mightily to this end, even for the perfecting the ſaints? And the grace and power of God, working mightily againſt ſin and the power of Satan, is it not able to conquer Satan, and to make him fall like lightening, and to trample him under feet? Conſider *ver.* 19. and 2 *Theſſ.* i. 11, 12.

Query 7. Did the apoſtles ever preach ſuch a doctrine, that no man could be perfected in this life; but man muſt always (every day) be committing ſin? Nay, did they not ſpeak wiſdom among them that were perfect, and ſay, Let as many of us as be perfect, be thus minded? Did they not diſtinguiſh between the weak, and between the ſtrong and perfect? Do they not ſpeak of ſome that had overcome the wicked one, and were born of God, and did not ſin? It is a precious thing to feel the power of God regenerating the mind; but it is much more precious to witneſs it regenerated. But that ſtate none know but they that are in it; but this is moſt certain, that ſin is ſhut out of it, and that all things are new there.

Query 8. Will the myſtery of life, where it is received and turned to, ever ceaſe working againſt the myſtery of death, until it hath wrought it out of the mind? Shall judgment never be brought forth unto victory over ſin in the heart? Shall there never be pure and full communion with the Lord here in this world, without the interruption of ſin? *Theſe things*, ſaith John, *I write to you, that your joy may be full.* Shall the joy never be full in any? How can the joy be full, where ſin hath power and breaks in upon the ſoul, and prevaileth upon the mind, even to the committing of it daily? The ſoul that is weary of ſin, and grieved at its grieving God's Spirit thereby, can never come to full union and fellowſhip with the Lord, nor to have its joy full, while it doth that which grieves God's Spirit; for it is impoſſible but it ſhould grieve the ſoul alſo, and weaken its joy and rejoicing in the Lord.

V.

Some Queries concerning the Way of Life, and Myſtery of the Goſpel.

Query 1. IS not the way of life, the way of holineſs, the way of truth, the way of peace, one and the ſame in all ages and generations? Was there ever, or ſhall there ever be another than that which was from the beginning?

Query 2. Is not this way a pure way, a clean way? Can any impure thing walk in it? Is not the gate ſtrait, and the way narrow, that leadeth unto life? Is it eaſy finding it? or is it eaſy entering into it, and walking in it? Doth not the corruption and unholineſs of the hearts of many, hinder them from walking in the holy way of life and peace?

Query 3. Is not this way a myſtery? Can any learn it but thoſe whoſe eyes are opened by the Lord, and to whom the myſtery is revealed by him? Can any diſcern or underſtand it, but the children of the pure heavenly wiſdom, whom the Lord teacheth, and whoſe eyes he openeth, to ſee and juſtify it in every age?

Query 4. Is not the whole viſion of God, the whole viſion of life, the whole viſion of peace, a book ſealed to all ſorts (both learned and unlearned in every age and generation) but thoſe to whom the Lord unſeals it?

Query 5. May not ſuch as are not at all acquainted with the myſtery of godlineſs, the myſtery of life, the myſtery of redemption, read what the ſcriptures ſay concerning theſe things, and get a great deal of knowledge (from the letter of the ſcriptures) into their minds, and be able to raiſe doctrines, reaſons, uſes, *&c.* and back all by ſcriptures very plentifully? But are not thoſe who teach not from the myſtery of life, and gift of the Spirit, but only what they have gathered and formed from the letter; I ſay, are not ſuch blind leaders of the blind? and is it poſſible but that they themſelves, and ſuch as follow them, ſhould fall into the ditch? For it is only the myſtery of life and redemption (not a literal knowledge and wiſdom, though with an endeavour to practiſe according thereto) which preſerves out of the ditch. Oh! that this were duly conſidered of! for it is tenderly and weightily propoſed.

Query 6. What is the knowledge of Chriſt which ſaves? Is it a knowledge of him after the letter, or a knowledge of him in the Spirit and power of the endleſs life? Can he be known truly, livingly, and ſavingly, without the Father's revealing him in man? Or can any truly call him Lord, but they that are firſt taught by the Father to diſcern his ſpiritual and heavenly glory, and to receive him and bow to him in Spirit?

Query 7. What is it to kiſs the Son? Can any do ſo but thoſe who diſcern and receive the light of his Spirit?

Query

Query 8. Can any truly know the Father, unleſs the Son reveal him? or can any know the Son, unleſs the Father reveal him? I know men may get notions out of the ſcriptures concerning God the Father and his Son: but can they get true knowledge of either without the inſpiration of the Almighty which giveth underſtanding?

Query 9. Can any perſon fear God and depart from evil (any-where upon the face of the earth) without ſome viſit of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt to his ſoul, and without receiving ſomewhat of life and power from him? He is the wiſdom of God, he can teach this; but can any elſe teach it? If none elſe can teach it, then he that learned it, muſt needs learn it of him. Is not this (to wit, to fear God and depart from evil) the path of wiſdom, which is hid from all living, but ſuch as are taught by Chriſt, who is the wiſdom of God? Read *Job* xxviii. 12. to the end of the chapter, and conſider. For doth not the Spirit of Chriſt, which convinceth of ſin, reach to all men, and miniſter to all men, inwardly and ſpiritually, in ſome days of inſtruction about fearing God and departing from evil?

Query 10. Can any be acquainted with the fear of God, and be ſenſible of the hour of his judgment, and give glory to him and worſhip him, but they muſt know and receive the everlaſting goſpel? They that are ſent to preach this after the apoſtaſy, are they not ſent to preach it as the everlaſting goſpel? Read *Rev.* xiv. 6, 7. and conſider. For come to life and power in any doctrine, which Chriſt ſends his meſſengers to preach towards the ſalvation of mens ſouls, a man comes to the goſpel preſently; but read and aſſent to, and practiſe all the things (as well as men can) related in the ſcriptures, without the life and power, and ſo acknowledge and believe all that is ſaid concerning Chriſt; yet for all this, and in the midſt of all this, a man may miſs of the goſpel; for the goſpel is an hidden myſtery of the life and power, ſee *Coloſſ.* i. 26, 27.

Query 11. Is not the meſſage of the goſpel, That God is Light, and in him is no darkneſs at all? Doth not the Spirit of Chriſt preach this, more or leſs, to all people under heaven? Yea, is not the goſpel preached in every creature, and hid in thoſe that are loſt, whom the god of this world blindeth? For is not the Spirit of God, in ſome meaſure, every-where convincing men of ſin, and drawing them out of darkneſs into the ſenſe and obedience of light? And will not this be the general and univerſal condemnation of the world, that they did not bring their deeds to the light, but turned from it and hated it, loving the darkneſs more than it, becauſe their deeds were evil, and they had not a mind to part with them, but to remain and abide in them?

Alas! alas! men ſhould paſs through the knowledge of things after the letter, into the knowledge of things after the Spirit and power of the endleſs life; but inſtead thereof, men ſtick in their apprehenſions of the letter; and if any man be taught of God, and have the things of his kingdom, and the myſtery of the ſcriptures, revealed to him in the Spirit, and ſo ſignify of them

them in the words which God's wiſdom teacheth; yet ſo men know them not, but oppoſe and reſiſt the miniſtration of life and power in their day and generation! And this will be bitterneſs in the latter end, even as bitter to the profeſſors of this age, as the former denying of Chriſt's appearance in the fleſh was to the profeſſors of that age.

VI.

Some Queries concerning Righteouſneſs or Juſtification.

Query 1. IS there not a new covenant under the goſpel, as well as there was an old covenant under the law?

Query 2. What did the old covenant require? Did it not require obedience to the law of Moſes? What doth the new covenant require? Doth it not require faith in Chriſt and obedience to his Spirit? Doth it not require faith in the grace, and obedience to the grace which bringeth ſalvation, teaching to deny ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, *&c.?*

Query 3. What is the righteouſneſs or juſtification in the old covenant? What doth God juſtify in the old covenant? Doth he not juſtify the obedience thereto, and condemn all diſobedience? What is the righteouſneſs or juſtification of the new covenant? What doth God juſtify in men under the new covenant? Doth he not juſtify their faith in Chriſt, and their obedience to the law of his Spirit? Is not whatſoever is not of faith ſin, and condemned; and whatſoever is of faith holy, and juſtified?

Query 4. What is faith? Is it not the gift of God? What is obedience? Doth it not flow from faith? Is it not performed by the power and in the newneſs of the Spirit? and is not that juſtifiable, and always juſtified in the ſight of God? Doth it not ſpring from the new tree, from the holy root of life in the heart? and whatſoever ſprings therefrom, is it not holy and righteous? And is not whatſoever is truly holy and righteous, juſtified and accounted righteous by the holy and righteous God?

Query 5. To what end was Chriſt made under the law, and did fulfill the righteouſneſs of the law? Was it not that he might accompliſh and fulfill that righteouſneſs, and ſo make way for the bringing in of the everlaſting righteouſneſs, even of the righteouſneſs of his own nature and Spirit, which is everlaſting? Is not this the righteouſneſs which the children of the new covenant experience in the new and living way? Is not this far beyond the righteouſneſs of the law, if they could fulfill it ever ſo exactly from the letter? For I feel a vaſt difference between that righteouſneſs which would belong to me from the law, and the righteouſneſs which flows into my heart from the nature and Spirit of Chriſt revealed in me, and which floweth up in me from my union with him: for this is abſolutely a righteouſneſs of another nature, of another kind, of another root.

Query 6. If Christ's fulfilling the law of Moses, the law of the first covenant, were imputed to us as our righteousness, and we justified in the sight of God thereby, were not then our righteousness the righteousness of the first covenant in nature, and our justification a justification by the righteousness of the first covenant? For Christ was made under the law, made under the first covenant, and fulfilled the righteousness of the first covenant; so that if that be imputed to us for righteousness, then the righteousness of the first covenant is imputed to us for righteousness, and is our righteousness.

Query 7. Was not faith imputed to Abraham for righteousness? What was his righteousness? Was it not the faith which he had from Christ, whereby and wherewith he believed God? Is not faith of the nature of Christ? Is not true faith justified for ever, and doth it not justify him in whom it is found? And doth not gospel-obedience flow from faith? and hath it not of the nature of faith in it? Oh! how pure and precious was it in the eye of God, that Abraham reasoned not, consulted not with flesh and blood, but retired into faith in the pure power! *He believed God*, say the scriptures, *and it was accounted to him for righteousness*: and shall it not be imputed to us also, if we have the same faith, and believe in the same power?

VII.

Some Queries about being under the Law, and being under Grace.

Query 1. WHETHER they that have received the Spirit of grace, and are under the Spirit of grace; I say, whether they are under the law also, or witness freedom therefrom?

Query 2. What is the law? Is it not a ministration of death, of bondage, of condemnation? What is the Spirit of the Lord, the Spirit of grace? Is it not a Spirit of life, a Spirit of liberty, a Spirit that frees from bondage? They that have received it, and are in subjection to it, do they not partake of its liberty, and through it come into dominion over sin and death?

Query 3. Is the law to the righteous or unrighteous? Whom was it made for? He that cometh into the holy and righteous nature of the seed, doth he not come from under the law? Doth he not come into the nature, state and Spirit, which is free from the law?

Query 4. What is it to come through the law into the liberty and redemption of sons? What is it to know the seed free in the particular, and to come into the freedom of the seed? Doth not the Son make free, the Truth of God make free, all that come to it and dwell in it? and are not they that are made free by it, free indeed? O Sion! thy children are all free-born! Jerusalem which is above, is free, which is the mother of us all; and she bringeth forth none but free children. They that dwell in the height

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of notion, they are not free; but they that dwell in the power of life, know that which makes free, and witneſs freedom by it.

VIII.

Same Queries for the Profeſſors of Chriſtianity to conſider of, and try their States by. For it is good for every one to know and underſtand his Eſtate aright (what it is in the Sight of the Lord) and not to be miſtaken in a Matter of ſo great Concernment.

Query 1. IS thy ſpirit, heart, mind, ſoul and body, a temple for God to dwell in? Who dwells in thy heart? Doth the Holy Spirit or the unclean ſpirit? Is that diſlodged and purged out of thee, with which God will not dwell? Is that diſcovered and taken away, in which the wicked one dwelleth? O Jeruſalem! waſh thine heart from wickedneſs; how long ſhall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee! O Jeruſalem! wilt thou not be made clean? When ſhall it once be? Is not forbearing to touch every unclean thing, and cleanſing from all filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit, more neceſſary to the ſtate of a ſon and daughter of the Moſt High than moſt people are aware of? Read 2 *Cor.* vi. 16, 17. and *chap.* vii. 1.

Query 2. Is Chriſt revealed in thee? Doth God dwell any where, in any heart, but where Chriſt is, but where he is inwardly and ſpiritually revealed? *Know ye not that Chriſt is in you, except ye be reprobates?* And can any know Chriſt in them, who have not had him revealed there by the Father? Almoſt all ſorts of pretenders to Chriſt own him as ſpoken of without; but the true Chriſtian witneſſeth him revealed within: for it pleaſeth the Father to reveal the Son in ſuch; and none can be truly ingrafted into Chriſt, but as Chriſt is in ſome meaſure made manifeſt within.

Query 3. How doſt thou confeſs Jeſus to be the Lord? Is it by notions from the letter, or by feeling his Spirit and power revealed within, and thy heart made ſubject to his Spirit and power inwardly revealed? For there is a confeſſing Chriſt in and by the Spirit, and a confeſſing him without the Spirit, according as men can read, conceive, and apprehend of him from the letter. Conſider which of theſe thine is.

Query 4. Art thou come out of the apoſtaſy and ſpirit of darkneſs, into the light and Spirit of Chriſt? What was the apoſtaſy from? Was it not from the Spirit, from the anointing? Wherein did it conſiſt? Did it conſiſt in holding a knowledge of Chriſt, and form of godlineſs out of the power? Art thou returned to the anointing? To the Holy Spirit of the Father? Haſt thou received it? Doſt thou live and walk in it, and not fulfil the luſts of the fleſh?

Query 5. Doſt thou know the tree of righteouſneſs, and the tree of unrighteouſneſs, inwardly? Haſt thou felt the axe laid to the root of the corrupt tree, and it cut down; and the holy plant of God (the plant of his

renown) planted in thy heart, and bringing forth fruit to him? Can the fruit ever become good in thee till the tree be made good? Can the corrupt tree ever bring forth the holy fruit of righteouſneſs to the Lord? Oh! mind thy growth! I mean, from what thou groweſt, and from what thy fruit proceedeth: for all the knowledge, faith, love, zeal, practices, &c. which proceed not from the renewed Spirit and nature, is not the good fruit which God calls for and accepts; but the denying the leaſt cuſtom or faſhion of this world, from a renewed nature, and from the drawings and teachings of God's Spirit, is good fruit, and accepted by him.

Query 6. Can any be redeemed to God, but by his judgment and righteouſneſs revealed in them? Is the ſoul redeemed from its enemies, while its enemies remain in ſtrength, and have the dominion over it? Where grace is received, and the ſoul taught by it and ſubject to it; doth it not break the dominion of ſin? As the ſpirit of judgment and burning is felt in any heart, doth it not cut down and burn up ſin there? And as the righteous Spirit is turned to, is not his righteous nature received, and doth not the holy and righteous ſeed ſpring up in the heart? and as it ſpringeth up, doth it not redeem and deliver that which is joined to it? Can any be redeemed by a righteouſneſs at a diſtance, without partaking of the new, and holy, and righteous image of the Son? And he that is righteous in meaſure, he may do righteouſneſs; but no man can do righteouſneſs, until he become righteous, by being joined to, changed by, and in ſome meaſure brought forth a new plant to God, in the new, righteous, and holy ſeed. See 1 *John* iii. 7.

Query 7. Do ye indeed know the new covenant? Was it ever inwardly revealed in you? Do ye know the difference between reading the holy directions given forth in the ſcriptures, and ſo getting them into your minds and practiſing them, as well as you can; I ſay, do ye know the difference between this and God's writing them in your hearts, and cauſing you to walk in his ways? Do ye know the difference between reading in the letter and in the Spirit; and between walking according to the oldneſs of the letter, and according to the newneſs of the Spirit? Oh! that ye might not be deceived about theſe things, but might know the truth, as it is in Jeſus, and come into fellowſhip with us therein! For truly our fellowſhip is with the Father and the Son, in that which changeth not, but is one and the ſame for ever: yea, the Lord our God hath redeemed us out of all the changeable ways, religions and worſhips, into the one pure way of life, and into the worſhip in the one Spirit and truth, which changeth not, but is ſtill what it was, even one and the ſame before the law of Moſes, or writings of the prophets, all the time of the law, while Chriſt was in the fleſh, afterwards when he was revealed in Spirit, and all the time of the apoſtaſy, and after the apoſtaſy, and ſo for ever.

IX.

A Queſtion anſwered about Preaching the Goſpel after the Apoſtaſy.

Queſt. *WHY doth God after the apoſtaſy ſend an angel to preach the everlaſting goſpel, after a manner different from what it was preached before the apoſtaſy? How was it preached before the apoſtaſy? Was it not preached thus, That in Chriſt alone is remiſſion of ſins, and ſalvation through faith in his blood? How is it to be preached after the apoſtaſy? Is not an angel from God ſent to preach it thus; Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come; and worſhip him that made heaven and earth, and the ſea, and the fountains of waters? Is this the ſame goſpel that was preached before? How different is the ſound thereof! Surely this would ſeem not the ſame, but rather another goſpel, to any man who is not taught of God, and hath not received of him the true underſtanding to obſerve and diſcern the nature of things.*

Anſw. The goſpel is the ſame in ſubſtance, though differing in ſound and manner of appearance; and they that judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment, experience it to be the ſame: for whoever receives the goſpel thus preached, receives the power of God unto ſalvation, which goeth along with his fear, and with the hour of judgment, and with the true worſhip.

And this is the reaſon why the Lord ſends his angel thus to preach it; that he might ſhut out the birth of the falſe wiſdom, and convey it to the children of the true wiſdom. For in the apoſtaſy, the doctrines of the knowledge of Chriſt had been corrupted, and held in the wrong part; and men had got a wrong knowledge and a dead belief, concerning Chriſt and his blood, *&c.*

Therefore to ſhut out theſe, God ſo orders his goſpel to be preached, as theſe cannot underſtand it, nor know it to be the goſpel, nor come into this ſpiritual miniſtration of it; but thoſe whom the Lord toucheth, whoſe hearts he openeth and quickeneth, they (in the demonſtration of his Spirit) have the ſenſe and obedience of it: for men had got a form of religion, a form of knowledge, a form of doctrine, a form of worſhip out of the power. Therefore the Lord comes with the light of his Spirit, to ſever between that which was known and held out of the power, and that which was received and held in the power, and ſo preached the truth, that none but thoſe that are of the truth, can own and receive it.

Had he ſent an angel to preach the birth of Chriſt, the death of Chriſt, his reſurrection, *&c.* all the dead would receive this; but to preach thus, *Fear God, come to the Spirit of judgment and burning; worſhip him that made the heaven, the earth, the ſea, and fountains of waters*; who can underſtand what this means? Who can know this to be the everlaſting goſpel, but he that is taught of God?

This is to preach God the creator, ſaith the wiſe profeſſor; *this is not to preach Chriſt the redeemer*; *this is not to preach the everlaſting goſpel*, will they readily ſay. Yea; but God who is wiſe, and knows what the goſpel is, and ſends his angel to preach it after the apoſtaſy, ſends it thus to be preached to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people: read *Rev.* xiv. 6, 7. and conſider ſeriouſly, and ſpurn not againſt the way of God's preaching his everlaſting truth, wherein is wrapped up the eternal ſalvation and happineſs of mankind; yea, more eſpecially of this age, who ought to bow to God in this his way of diſpenſing his truth, which he himſelf hath choſen.

Now, conſider this one thing; was ever the goſpel thus preached before this age? The ſame goſpel was preached from the beginning; but was it ever thus preached before? *The ſeed of the woman ſhall bruiſe the Serpent's head*; ſo it was preached to Adam: *In thy ſeed ſhall all the families of the earth be bleſſed*; ſo it was preached to Abraham: *To us a child is born, to us a Son is given*, &c. ſo it was preached in the days of the prophets: *By this man, every one that believeth in his name, ſhall receive remiſſion of ſins.* So it was preached in the apoſtles days.

And in the reformation from popery, ſome of the doctrines about *free juſtification by grace*, and of *remiſſion of ſins by faith in Chriſt*, &c. were revived; but, was it ever preached thus before our age? Did perſons ever come forth in the power and authority of God, bidding men fear him, and be ſenſible of the hour of his judgment, even of his mighty day which was at hand; and come out of all falſe ways and worſhips, into the worſhip of him who made heaven and earth, and the ſea, and fountains of waters? I ſay, did perſons ever come forth thus, and preach the everlaſting goſpel thus, preach theſe doctrines to men, as the goſpel of God, before this day? And let men well conſider, whether it be not indeed of God, and by his command and power thus preached; and take heed of oppoſing his meſſage, leſt they be found fighters againſt him.

For mind: was not this always the ſum and ſubſtance in every diſpenſation? Could men be ſaved by believing that the *ſeed of the woman ſhould bruiſe the Serpent's head?* Or that in *Abraham's ſeed all the families of the earth ſhould be bleſſed?* Or, *that a child ſhould be born, and a Son given?* Or that, *through Chriſt's name, remiſſion of ſins was to be had*, &c.? without coming into the true fear, which teacheth and cauſeth to depart from evil; and without giving glory to God, in bowing to his Spirit's inſtructions and teachings; and without worſhipping him, who made heaven and earth, and ſea, and fountains of waters? Or could any fear the Lord, and give glory to him, and come under the hour of his judgment, and worſhip him, who made heaven, and earth, and ſea, and fountains of waters; but they muſt firſt feel the power of the goſpel overcoming their ſpirits, and leading them thither.

X.

Two Queſtions anſwered; one concerning others not learning what God teacheth us; the other concerning the Way of his Teaching us.

Queſt. 1. *WHAT is the reaſon that others cannot learn nor become ſubject to the ſame ſpiritual truths, which God makes manifeſt to us, and ſubjecteth our ſpirits to?*

Anſw. The reaſon is, becauſe they do not learn the ſame way that God teacheth us; and ſo, though they have many advantages above us of parts, learning, &c. and ſtudy hard to know much; yet not coming into the right way, wherein God's Spirit teacheth, they never come to learn the truth, as it is there taught.

Queſt. 2. *But what is the way wherein God teacheth you?* may ſome ſay.

Anſw. Thus God teacheth us, by giving us an underſtanding to know him that is true, and by opening an ear in us to hear his voice; and ſo, being kept within the limits of that underſtanding and ear, we come to hear and know aright.

Take heed (ſaid Chriſt) *how ye hear.* Oh! the Lord hath made us ſenſible of the weight of that ſcripture; and we have often experienced, that it is eaſy to hear amiſs, and read amiſs, and pray amiſs, and believe amiſs, and hope amiſs; but hard to do any of theſe aright. Therefore, we are taught ſtill to wait for the ſtirring of the waters, for the moving of God's Holy Spirit upon our ſpirits; and then healing virtue and ability is felt and received from him, to perform what he requires.

Thus, when we read the ſcriptures, our eyes are towards him, and we watch againſt our own underſtandings, againſt what they could gather or comprehend of themſelves, and wait to feel how he will open our ſpirits, and what he will make manifeſt to them, being opened; and if he drop down nothing, we gather nothing; but if he give light, then in his light we ſee and receive light. So in praying, we wait to feel the birth of life (which is of the Father, and which the Father hears) breathe in us; and ſo far as the Spirit of the Father breathes upon it, and it breathes to the Father, ſo far we pray; and when life ſtops, we ſtop, and dare not offer up to God any ſacrifice of our own, but what the Father prepares and gives us. So in eating and drinking, and whatever we do, our heart is retired to the Lord, and we wait to feel every thing ſanctified by his preſence and bleſſing; and, indeed, here every thing is ſweet unto us. And in whatever God enables us to do, we narrowly watch to that direction of Chriſt, *not to let the left hand know what the right hand doth.* For we are nothing of ourſelves, nor can do any thing of ourſelves; therefore whatever is done in us, as we feel the grace of God, the virtue and power of his life working all in us; ſo it is ſtill given us to attribute all the honour and glory thereto.

And

And in this temper of ſpirit we find nothing too hard for us; for the ſtrength of Chriſt is ſtill at hand, even in the midſt of our weakneſs; and the riches of the kingdom is ſtill at hand in the midſt of our poverty and nothingneſs; and his ſtrength works, and our weakneſs doth not hinder the glory of him that works through it. So being beaten to it, by conſtant ſenſe, and daily experience, that it is not by our willing or running, according to our wiſdom and ſtrength, that we can attain any thing; but by God's ſhewing mercy to us in Chriſt; we therefore daily wait at the poſts of God's heavenly wiſdom, to feel the gate of mercy and tender love opened to us, and mercy and love flow in upon us; whereby we may, and daily do obtain what our hearts deſire and ſeek after, bleſſed be the Lord for ever.

And truly here in the ſpringings of love, and openings of mercy from our God, we have fellowſhip and converſe with the Father and Son, and one with another, in the holy Spirit of life; and we teſtify of theſe things to others, that they alſo might come into the ſame fellowſhip, and be of the ſame faith which flows from, and abides in, and makes living, in the power and life eternal.

The Lord guide all tender, breathing, panting ſpirits hither, that they may be ſatisfied in the goodneſs and loving-kindneſs of the Lord, and may eat abundantly of the fatneſs of his houſe, and drink of the rivers of his pleaſures, and not wander up and down any longer in their own barren thoughts, apprehenſions, and conceivings upon the ſcriptures.

XI.

Of the threefold Appearance of Chriſt; to wit, under the Law, in a Body of Fleſh, and in his Spirit and Power.

FIRST, *Under the law.* Various were the appearances of Chriſt; ſometimes as an angel, in the likeneſs of a man; ſo to Abraham, and ſo to Jacob, when Jacob wreſtled with him, and prevailed, and had overcome; ſo to Joſhua, or the captain of the Lord's hoſt, at his beſieging Jericho; ſo to Moſes in the buſh, he appeared as an angel, *Acts* vii. 35. ſo likewiſe in viſions. Thoſe glorious appearances of God to the prophets in viſions, were the appearances of Chriſt; as particularly, that glorious appearance of God ſitting upon a throne, and his train filling the temple, and the Seraphims crying, *Holy! holy! holy is the Lord of hoſts; his glory is the fulneſs of the whole earth!* Iſa. vi. This was an appearance of Chriſt to Iſaiah, as is manifeſt, *John* xii. 41. where the Evangeliſt (relating to that place) uſeth this expreſſion: *Theſe things ſaid Iſaiah, when he ſaw his glory, and ſpake of him.* So he was the angel of God's preſence, which went before the Jews, in all their journeyings and travels out of Egypt, through the ſea, and in the wilderneſs, and in the time of the Judges; and wrought all their deliverances for them, as is ſignified, *Iſa.* lxiii. 9. *In all their*

their afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his preſence ſaved them, &c. So with the Three Children, he appeared in the midſt of the fiery furnace *in a form like the Son of God*, as Nebuchadnezzar judged, *Dan.* iii. 25.

Now indeed the whole law was a ſhadow of him, who was to come to be the ſubſtance of it, and to perform that inwardly in the hearts of his, which the law figured forth, and repreſented outwardly. Thus Moſes and all the prophets were forerunners of him, the great prophet of the ſpiritual Iſrael of God. All the prieſts, eſpecially the high-prieſt, were types and forerunners of him, and to end in him, who is the high-prieſt over the houſhold of God for ever. The judges and ſaviours were types of him, the great Saviour and Redeemer: for they ſaved not by their own ſtrength, but by his Spirit and power coming upon them; ſo that the yoke (which was made and brought upon them by their rebellion againſt the Lord, and diſobedience to his law) was ſtill broken, becauſe of the anointing.

David, Solomon, and the good kings, were types of him. David, of his conqueſt over his ſpiritual enemies; Solomon, of his ruling his Iſrael in peace, after he had conquered their enemies.

Circumciſion was a type of his circumciſing the heart, that his children, (his holy ſeed) might love the Lord their God with all their heart, and live.

The paſſover, and blood of the lamb, was a type of his blood, and ſprinkled upon the conſcience, which preſerveth againſt the ſtroke and power of the deſtroyer; and ſo God paſſeth over all ſuch, when he viſits for ſin and tranſgreſſion.

The outward ſabbath was a type of the pure reſt, which Chriſt gives to thoſe that believe in his name: for indeed they that truly believe in him do enter into reſt, and ceaſe from their own labour and workings of themſelves, and witneſs God's working in them, both *to will and to do of his good pleaſure.*

The outward law, in the letter, written in tables of ſtone, was a ſhadow of the inward, living, pure, powerful, ſpiritual law of love and life, which God writes in the hearts of his children, which conſtrains them to obedience, and enables them to do all that God requires of them with eaſe and delight. For truly the yoke of his law is eaſy, and the burden of his commandments is light; ſo that they are not at all grievous to them that are under, and in ſubjection to, his Spirit.

When the mind is gathered, and brought from under the ſpirit and power of darkneſs into his Spirit and power, oh! how eaſy is it to believe, to love, to obey, *&c.* Indeed there is nothing but love, and faith, and obedience, and life, and righteouſneſs, and holineſs, and pure power, and peace, and joy here. *For the old things are paſſed away, and all things are become new in Chriſt*, to them that are in the new creation in him.

So Canaan, the Holy Land, repreſented the Land of life, or country of life, into which God gathers, and in which he feeds and preſerves all the

living, whom he gathers out of the territories of death and darkneſs. And the plenty and fullneſs of the land of Canaan, and the ſweet rivers therein, ſignified the abundance of rich things, and the rivers of God's pleaſure, whereof his redeemed-ones drink, as they come to live, and dwell, and walk, and ſup in and with him.

Jeruſalem, the holy city, was a figure of the new Jeruſalem, the ſpiritual Jeruſalem, the heavenly Jeruſalem, which is the mother of all them that are born of the Spirit; and the hill whereon Jeruſalem was built, ſignified God's holy mountain, whereon this his city is built; and the inhabitants of the outward Jeruſalem ſignified the inhabiters of the new and inward Jeruſalem; and the temple ſignified Chriſt's body, and the bodies of the ſaints, which are temples, which the Holy One dwells in the midſt of. And that altar in the outward temple ſignified the altar in this inward temple, which all the true, inward, ſpiritual Jews have right to partake of, and none elſe. The fire in the outward temple, and the candleſticks, and the lights which were never to go out, ſignified the holy fire in the ſpiritual temple, which comes from heaven, wherewith all the ſpiritual ſacrifices are to be offered up; and the candleſtick is to hold the light (and the prieſts to keep the lamps burning) or God will remove it out of its place. So the holy garments of the prieſts ſignified the robes of righteouſneſs, innocency, and purity, wherewith the people of God under the goſpel (who are a royal prieſthood to him) are to be cloathed.

And the ark ſignified that which holds the law of the new covenant; and the pot of manna, with which kind of food God fed and nouriſhed the ſoul in the wilderneſs, before he brought it into the Holy Land, muſt be for an everlaſting memorial in the land of the living. For indeed Chriſt appeared to, and was with, that people in the wilderneſs, in a cloud by day, and in a pillar of fire by night; which ſignified the leadings of God's Spirit in the day of the goſpel, *Iſai.* iv. 5. And he was the rock that followed them; and he was the manna of which they did eat, and the water of which they did drink; for they did eat and drink of the heavenly things in a figure, and (as their ſpirits were at any time opened) had a taſte and ſenſe of the true food, in and through the figure; yea, doubtleſs, at ſome times, they had all ſome ſenſe, and did all eat of the ſame ſpiritual meat as we now eat of, *and did all drink of the ſame ſpiritual drink* as we now drink of, 1 *Cor.* x. 3, 4. for they were not only all under the cloud, and did not only all paſs through the ſea, but they were alſo all baptized in the cloud and in the ſea, having a ſenſe of the pure power of the Lord, and of his outſtretched arm made bare for them; in which ſenſe they ſang his praiſe, though they ſoon afterwards forgot his works, *Pſal.* cvi. 11, 12. So likewiſe there was Aaron's rod, that budded, laid up in the ark; which is the evidence of the true prieſthood and miniſtry for ever; and that which is ſo, is not to be ſpurned againſt, but ſtill to be acknowledged and honoured, as of God.

In

In it alſo were the tables of the law, in the repreſentative ark; in the true ark are the tables of the law of life, which God writes by the finger of his Spirit, and appoints to be kept in the ſpiritual ark for ever.

Above the ark was the mercy-ſeat, with two cherubims of glory, one at each end of it, ſpreading their wings on high over the mercy-ſeat, between whom God dwelt or ſat, where God met with and communed with Moſes, and the prieſts under the law, when they came to worſhip him, and enquire of him; which figured out the true mercy-ſeat under the goſpel, where the true prieſts (the true circumciſion of the ſpiritual Iſrael of God) have acceſs with boldneſs to the throne of grace, that (through the high-prieſt of their profeſſion) they may obtain mercy and grace, to help in time of need.

So under the law, all the ſacrifices (the ſin-offering, the peace-offering, the thank-offering, the heave-offering, the wave-offering, the whole burnt-offering, the meat-offering, the drink-offering, *&c.*) ſignified Chriſt, the one offering, who comprehends them all; and the holy, ſpiritual, heavenly offerings, which the ſpiritual people (the prieſts of the goſpel) are daily to offer up to God: and the ſweet ſpices, frankincenſe, and odours, ſignified the ſweet ſeaſonings of the goſpel ſacrifices with grace, with ſalt, with the Spirit, with the freſh breathings of life, with innocency, with meekneſs, with tenderneſs, with zeal, with faith, with love, *&c.* which yields a moſt pleaſant ſcent in the noſtrils of the Lord.

Now in the bullock and goat for the ſin-offering, the blood was to be brought into the holy place, to make atonement; and the fat and inwards burnt on the altar; and the fleſh, ſkin, and dung, carried forth and burnt without the camp. What means this? Oh! how precious is it to read the figures of the heavenly things with true underſtanding! but to read through the figures (with the eye of life, with the eye of the Spirit) into the inviſible ſubſtance, this is ſweet, precious, and heavenly indeed!

Secondly, *Concerning Chriſt's appearance in a body of fleſh.* When the time of theſe ſhadows drew towards an end, and the fullneſs of time was come, he who thus appeared in ſeveral types and ſhadows among that people of the Jews under the law, he now came down from the Father, debaſed himſelf, and cloathed himſelf like a man, partaking of fleſh and blood; and was in all things made like unto us (excepting ſin; for he was the Lamb without ſpot) humbling himſelf to come under the law, and under the curſe, that he might redeem thoſe that are under the law (and under the curſe) by fulfilling the righteouſneſs thereof, and bringing them through into the righteouſneſs everlaſting.

Now while he was in the body, his glory did ſhine to the eye of the children of the true wiſdom: his diſciples (to whom not fleſh and blood, nor the wiſdom and knowledge which they could get from the letter, but his Father revealed him) they ſaw the hidden glory; they ſaw through the veil of his fleſh, and beheld him as the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Now in this body he finiſhed the work which his Father gave him to do; he fulfilled all righteouſneſs (the righteouſneſs of the letter, the righteouſneſs of the Spirit) that he might bring *his* through the righteouſneſs of the law or letter, into the righteouſneſs of the Spirit and power, into the righteouſneſs of the new life; and here that ſcripture is read and fulfilled, *I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live to God.* So his whole life was a doing the will of the Father, which ſent him.

When he was but twelve years old, he diſputed with the doctors and teachers of the law, hearing and aſking them queſtions (diſcovering the pure wiſdom of the Father which dwelt in him) becauſe it was his Father's buſineſs which he was to be about, as he told his mother, *Luke* ii. 49. And when the Lord led him into the wilderneſs to be tried, he went and was tempted, that he might fight the battle againſt his great adverſary. And when the Spirit of the Lord was upon him, moving him to preach the goſpel, he preached the goſpel in the Spirit and power of the Father, and went about doing good, and healing all that were oppreſſed of the devil, as his Father's Spirit led and guided him: for he did nothing of himſelf, or in his own will, or for himſelf; but all in the will and time of the Father.

Mine hour is not yet come, ſaid he to his mother, when ſhe was haſty to have him do that miracle of turning water into wine, *John* ii. 4. And ſo when his brethren urged him to go up to the feaſt, *John* vii. 3, 4. *My time*, ſaid he, *is not yet come; your time is always ready*, ver. 5.

Thus he did always pleaſe his Father, and ſeek the honour of him that ſent him; and was obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs, being willing to drink of the cup which his Father gave him to drink: and ſo having finiſhed his work, he returned from whence he came, and ſat down at the right-hand of the majeſty on high, being exalted above all principalities, and powers, and dominions, both in this world, and in that which is to come.

Thirdly, Now the third appearance of Chriſt, which theſe two outward appearances made way for, was his appearance *in Spirit*, even his pure, *inward, heavenly* appearance in the hearts of his children. This he bids his diſciples wait for; telling them, *that he would not leave them comfortleſs, but would come again to them.* They had had the appearance of the bridegroom in the fleſh, and he was to go away. It could not be helped; it was neceſſary for them that he ſhould go away; but (ſaith he) *I will come again.* The ſame power and preſence that is now with you in a body of fleſh, ſhall viſit you in Spirit, and ſo abide with you for ever. For he that is now with you ſhall be in you; till that time ye ſhall have ſorrow, and be like a travailing woman; but the world, in the mean time, ſhall rejoice; *but I will ſee you again, and your heart ſhall rejoice, and your joy no man takes from you.* And was it not ſo? Did not Chriſt ſend the Spirit, the Comforter? Did he not come in the Spirit and power of the Moſt High, to be with them always to the *end of the world?* Did he not bid them *ſtay and wait at Jeruſalem*

Jeruſalem for that appearance of him in his Spirit, and not go about his work and meſſage till he came in the power and authority of his Father to go along with them? And did not their hearts rejoice when he came with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory? Had they not then the joy and peace which paſſed all the underſtanding of man; which *joy and peace none could take from them*; which joy they were not promiſed that they ſhould receive till he came and ſaw them again? Yea, truly; in the kingdom, Spirit, and power of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt there is a *ſeeing eye to eye.* Yea, it was ſo, in ſome meaſure, with ſome precious ones in the days of old, which that promiſe, (*Pſal.* xxxii. 8. *I will guide thee with mine eye*) intimates; for the eye of the ſoul muſt be upon God's eye, and obſerve the motion thereof, if it be guided thereby.

And truly this adminiſtration of the Spirit and power of the goſpel is exceeding glorious, and they that come into it, come into the glory and heavenly dominion and authority of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt (and ſo are made kings by him, and wear crowns in his preſence, though they ſtill caſt them at his feet) and are changed from glory to glory; and behold, as in a mirror, the glory of the Lord, which none can do but with the eye which is in ſome meaſure changed and glorified.

Now this diſpenſation of the goſpel in Spirit and power, began in the apoſtles days, and the church was exceeding chaſte, pure, and beautiful then, without ſpot or wrinkle; though there were ſome crept into the outward court, which were ſpots among them; but that did not mar the beauty of the reſt, but they could bring victory and dominion to him that ſat on the throne, and witneſſed that ſalvation, and ſtrength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Chriſt was come. For the man-child was born, and was among them; and the glorious woman (the church, the ſpouſe of Chriſt) *was cloathed with the ſun*, &c. and had both her huſband (her Lord and head) and the man-child (the pure birth of life) with her. But there was a falling away after this, and a thick dark night, and a very great and univerſal apoſtaſy from the Spirit and power of the apoſtles; many departing out of the fear into the high-mindedneſs, and not keeping their ſtanding in the faith, and love, and obedience of the truth; but holding a form of godlineſs out of the power.

But God, in his tender mercies, determined to ſend an angel to preach his everlaſting goſpel again; and in due time ſo did, as is expreſſed, *Rev.* xiv. 6, 7. (Mark: none could preach the everlaſting goſpel after the apoſtaſy, by any ordination or ſucceſſion of miniſtry left amongſt men; but there muſt be a new receiving of the goſpel, by a new meſſage and commiſſion from on high). And God likewiſe ſent forth his Spirit of judgment and burning to conſume the whore (the falſe church) which was grown very great, ſitting over peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues; and to bring the true church out of the wilderneſs into enjoyment of her beauty and glory again. And when ſhe comes again, ſhe comes as a morning without clouds, without

out any veil, without any outward types or ſhadows of the glory to be revealed, even in the pure and heavenly glory itſelf.

He that hath a true eye, let him read this; and he that hath an heart opened by the Lord, let him acknowledge it: for the name of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt is exalted, and the knees of his redeemed-ones bow to him, and acknowledge him the only Anointed One, the only Lord and King over all, to the glory of God the Father. *Amen.*

XII.

Concerning Mount Sinai, *and* Mount Sion.

WAS not Sinai the mount that might be touched, an earthly mount, from whence was the miniſtration of the law outward, or in the letter, which gendered to bondage, condemnation, and death? Doth not the apoſtle Peter ſay, concerning the law as ſo adminiſtered, *that it was a yoke too heavy for them or their fathers to bear?* Acts xv. 10.

Is not the goſpel Sion a ſpiritual mount, an heavenly mount, a mount that cannot be touched by human ſenſes, a mount from whence is the miniſtration of the Spirit, the miniſtration of liberty, the miniſtration of life, the miniſtration of the glory that excelleth? Is it not the holy mountain, whereon the holy city (the New Jeruſalem) is built, and where the King of Righteouſneſs rules in righteouſneſs and peace over all his ſubjects; where he makes to them the feaſt of fat things, and of wines on the lees well refined; where *he* and *his* ſup together, eating and drinking the bread and wine of the kingdom, even the living bread, and the fruit of the living vine?

Is not the whole miniſtration of life, from the beginning to end, from Mount Sion? Is it, any of it, from Mount Sinai?

Is not Sion to be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteouſneſs? Doth either the judgment, or the righteouſneſs, wherewith Sion and her converts are to be redeemed, come from Mount Sinai? Do they not both come from Mount Sion?

Out of *Sion ſhall go forth the law, and Word of the Lord from Jeruſalem*, Iſai. ii. He that underſtandeth this ſcripture, knoweth the goſpel ſtate.

Ye are not come (ſaid the apoſtle) *to the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire; nor unto blackneſs, and darkneſs, and tempeſt, and the ſound of a trumpet, and the voice of words*, &c.; *but ye are come to Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jeruſalem*, &c. *Heb.* xii.

Now they that are come thither, they witneſs the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus, which maketh free from the law of ſin and death; and the pure Word of eternal life iſſuing thence, even from that Sion and Jeruſalem.

Mind

Mind that ſcripture, *Gal.* iv. 25, 26. *For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and anſwereth to Jeruſalem, which now is, and is in bondage, with her children; but Jeruſalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.*

We read, *Rev.* xi. 19. *That the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was ſeen in his temple the ark of his teſtament; and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.* Whence did thoſe lightnings, voices, thunderings, *&c.* iſſue; out of Sinai, or out of Sion? Doth not the Lion of the tribe of Judah roar out of Sion againſt his enemies, and ſhoot the arrows of his judgments from thence? And if he judge his enemies from thence, doth he not judge his people from thence alſo? Is not his fire in Sion, and his furnace in Jeruſalem? And doth not the Spirit of judgment and burning (by which he waſheth and purgeth away the blood and filth of the daughter of Sion) iſſue forth from thence? Oh! that men had a true and ſpiritual underſtanding of theſe things, and were taught of God to know and diſtinguiſh concerning the things of his kingdom!

XIII.

Of the Signification of Mount Sinai, *and* Mount Sion.

MOUNT Sinai was that mount of earth which the voice and preſence of the Lord ſhook at the miniſtration of the law outward.

Now there is an inward earth, which is to be ſhaken alſo; even the nature which tranſgreſſed, the nature which was ſubject to ſin, and under the curſe, the earth which brings forth briars and thorns. Into the earth the plough of the Lord is to go, to break it up, and overturn it, that there may be a new earth formed, fit to receive the heavenly ſeed; out of which it may ſpring, and bring forth fruit to God. Yea, not only the earth, but alſo the heavens, are to be ſhaken, yea, and removed too; tho' the ſhaking of Mount Sinai did not ſignify that, but only the ſhaking of the earth. *But yet once more* (ſaith the Lord) *I ſhake not earth only, but alſo heaven*; which ſignifieth the removing of thoſe things that may be ſhaken, that thoſe things which cannot be ſhaken may remain.

There is that which is changeable, and there is that which is unchangeable. The old earth, and the old heavens, are changeable; the new heavens, and the new earth, are unchangeable. There is a changeable mind, a changeable ſpirit, a changeable nature, a changeable will, a changeable wiſdom, a changeable reaſon and underſtanding (which one while goeth this way, and another while that way) a changeable knowledge of God; which man learns not of the Spirit of the Lord, but after a traditional way, and by the ſearch of his own hunting mind, and drinks into that part which is old and earthly. There is man's kindling a fire there, a beating out ſparks there, with which he compaſſeth about and warmeth himſelf, getting unto himſelf peace and joy, hope and confidence, *&c.* But when the Lord appears,

pears, and his voice is heard (when he ariſeth to ſhake terribly the earth, yea, and the heavens alſo) all theſe will be ſhaken, and fall like untimely figs at the ruſhing of a mighty wind and terrible tempeſt.

For the day of the Lord, the day of his pure appearance, the day of the brightneſs of his riſing, will be upon all that is high and lofty; upon all that is proud and lifted up above the pure ſeed. Every cedar of Lebanon, and oak of Baſhan, that is high and lifted up; every high mountain and hill that are lifted up; every high tower, and fenced wall; every ſhip of Tarſhiſh, and pleaſant picture, *&c.* ſhall all feel the terror of his majeſty: and that alone which is of the pure ſeed, gathered into the ſeed, and changed into the nature of the ſeed, that alone ſhall ſtand. Nothing elſe ſhall be able to dwell with the devouring fire, and everlaſting burnings: ſo that it may be very well ſaid, *Who may abide the day of his coming; and who ſhall ſtand when he appeareth?* For he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's ſoap; and he cometh with his fan in his hand, to fan away the chaff; and ſhall ſit as a refiner and purifier of ſilver, to purify the ſons of Levi, and purge them as gold and ſilver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteouſneſs, pleaſant to the Lord; which none can do but thoſe that are purified by him.

And happy will they be, whoſe religion and worſhip in that day will ſtand the trial, and bear the fire. And oh! bleſſed for ever be the Lord, who is come near to judgment, and is a ſwift witneſs againſt all deceit and unrighteouſneſs; but a juſtifier of them whoſe conſciences he has ſprinkled with the blood of Jeſus.

But now, as the Lord taketh away the old, ſo he bringeth in the new. As he removeth the old earth, and the old heavens, wherein dwelt unrighteouſneſs; ſo he formeth and bringeth forth the new heavens, and the new earth, wherein dwells righteouſneſs.

And here the kingdom is known and received, which can never be ſhaken. Here is the Mount Sion, which ſhall never be removed; and the Jeruſalem, one of whoſe ſtakes or cords ſhall never be plucked up, or broken. Here is the city which hath everlaſting foundations, whoſe builder and maker is God.

Bleſſed are they that come hither, and dwell here; who are not come to the mount that may be touched and ſhaken, and removed (read inwardly); but to the holy mount of God, and whereon all the buildings of life are raiſed, and whereon they ſtand firm for ever.

And all that are herein built up and eſtabliſhed can truly ſay, and ſing in ſpirit, *Bleſſed be the Lord God of Iſrael, and bleſſed by him ſhall be the habitation of juſtice, and mountain of holineſs, from this time forth for evermore.* For Jeruſalem is now become a quiet habitation, and the king of glory reigneth therein: for the Lord of Hoſts, who hath created the new heavens, and the new earth, hath created Jeruſalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy; and they ſhall be glad, and rejoice, and bleſs themſelves in him, for ever and ever. *Amen, Amen.*

XVI.

XIV.

Concerning the Temple and Sacrifices under the Goſpel.

GOD's temple under the goſpel is the light of his Son, the Spirit of his Son, and thoſe ſouls which are renewed, and built up an habitation for him in the Spirit of his Son, and thoſe bodies in which renewed minds and ſpirits dwell. God is light, and he dwelleth in light; God is Spirit, and his building is holy and ſpiritual; for he dwelleth in nothing that is dark, or corrupt, or unclean.

And that which is ſacrificed or offered up to God muſt be clean and pure. No unclean thought, no unclean deſire, nothing that is earthly, or fleſhly, or ſelfiſh, muſt be offered up to God; but the pure breathings of his own Spirit: for whatſoever is of him, and comes from him, is accepted with him; but whatever man can invent, or form, or offer up of his own, or of himſelf (though it be ever ſo glorious and taking in man's eye), yet it is but abomination in the ſight of the Lord.

Thus all the ſacrifices of the Gentiles (or heatheniſh nature) are rejected. Thus all the ſacrifices of the Jews outward (or of the profeſſing mind and nature, without the true life) are rejected alſo.

Wherewith ſhall I come before the Lord (ſaid the prophet of the Lord of old) *and bow myſelf before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleaſed with thouſands of rams, with ten thouſands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firſt-born for my tranſgreſſion; the fruit of my body for the ſin of my ſoul?* Mic. vi. 6, 7.

What ſaith the anſwer of God? No, no; this is not the way to come to pardon of ſin, or to acceptance with the Lord; but come to that which teacheth what is good, and what the *Lord requireth of thee, O man; which is to do juſtly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with the Lord.* Come thither in the teachings of God's Spirit, and worſhip there, and there thou ſhalt witneſs forgiveneſs of ſins, and acceptance with the Lord, *Mic.* vi. 7, 8. and *Iſai.* i. 16, 17, 18. For it was not offering ſacrifices of old (appointed under the law) that would do the thing, nor mens pleading the ſacrifice under the goſpel; but coming to that Spirit which teacheth holineſs, and being ſubject to that Spirit, and offering in that Spirit (to the Father) what proceeds therefrom. So that his building in the Spirit is the only temple, and the ſacrifices or offerings in the Spirit are the only offerings of the New-Teſtament.

And here every groan or ſigh towards the Lord after that which is pure, every ſupplication in the Spirit, every acknowledgment of the goodneſs of the Lord in a true and pure ſenſe, are of a ſweet ſavour in the noſtrils of the Lord: yea, uſing hoſpitality, relieving the poor, or doing any thing that is good from the good and holy root, are ſacrifices acceptable to the

Lord. Read theſe ſcriptures following (and if the Lord open thine eyes, thou mayeſt thereby come to ſee both what the temple and ſacrifices are), 1 *Cor.* iii. 16, and 2 *Cor.* vi. 16. *Iſai.* x. 7. 15. *Epheſ.* ii. 21, 22. *Heb.* iii. 6. *Rev.* xxi. 22. *John* iv. 23. *Pſal.* xc. 1. Theſe places foregoing are for the temple: then for the ſacrifices, *Pſal.* l. 14, 15. and li. 16, 17. and cxli. 2. *Mal.* i. 11. *Heb.* x. 8, 9. *Rom.* xii. 1. 1 *Cor.* vi. 19, 20. 1 *Pet.* ii. 5. *Heb.* xiii. 15. *Phil.* iv. 18.

XV.

Some Queſtions concerning the Light of CHRIST*'s Spirit anſwered, according to the Teſtimony of the Scriptures of Truth, and according to Experience.*

Queſt. 1. *WHAT is the meſſage which Chriſt ſent his apoſtles to declare, whom he ſent to preach the goſpel?*

Anſw. This is the meſſage which they heard of him, and which they declared unto others, *That God is light, and in him is no darkneſs at all.*

Queſt. 2. *What was Chriſt's intent in ſending them with this meſſage; and for what end were they to declare it to others?*

Anſw. For the opening of mens eyes and hearts, that men might come to a ſight and ſenſe of the darkneſs, and to a ſight and ſenſe of the light; and might be turned from darkneſs to light (and ſo from Satan's power to God); and might come out of the one into the other (that is, out of the darkneſs into the light), and ſo might walk in the light, as God is in the light.

Queſt. 3. *What is the danger of abiding in darkneſs?*

Anſw. In the darkneſs is ſin, death, condemnation, and deſtruction of the ſoul, and ſeparation from God and Chriſt for ever.

Queſt. 4. *What is the benefit of being turned to the light, and of coming into the light, and walking in the light, as God is in the light?*

Anſw. The benefits are great and many; three whereof I may now mention, which comprehend and contain in them many more.

Firſt, In the light, remiſſion of ſins is received; for there is the blood of ſprinkling, wherewith thoſe are ſprinkled that come thither; and indeed none can walk and abide there, but they come to witneſs the blood of Jeſus Chriſt, God's Son, cleanſing them from all ſin; and true, real cleanſing is no-where elſe witneſſed.

Secondly, They have fellowſhip with the Father and the Son, and come alſo into fellowſhip with the ſaints in light; which are great myſteries, and none knows what they mean but ſuch as are in that holy fellowſhip.

Thirdly, They there receive the earneſt of the everlaſting inheritance, and the ſealing up by God's Holy Spirit unto the day of full redemption.

Queſt. 5. *Where is the darkneſs which men are to be turned from?*

Anſw.

Anſw. It is within, chiefly within; there is Satan's kingdom; there is the houſe, which the *ſtrong man armed* keepeth; where his goods are in peace, till a *ſtronger* than he cometh to trouble and diſpoſſeſs him.

Queſt. 6. *How or where is the light to be met with which man is to be turned to?*

Anſw. It appears within alſo; it ſhines in the darkneſs: for thither Chriſt (the ſtronger) comes, with the light of his Spirit, to overcome and diſpoſſeſs the ſtrong man of his houſe and kingdom.

Queſt. 7. *When doth the light of Chriſt's Spirit ſhine in the darkneſs of man's heart?*

Anſw. When, and as God pleaſeth. For the light is his, and he cauſeth it to ſhine (in the hearts of the ſons and daughters of men) according to his pleaſure; and therefore men are to wait for the ſhining of his pure heavenly light in their hearts, that with it the darkneſs may be reſiſted, overcome, and ſubdued in them, and ſcattered and diſpelled from them, and their hearts filled with the light and power of life.

Queſt. 8. *How may a man perceive or know the light when it ſhines?*

Anſw. By its ſhining: for light (both outward and inward) manifeſts both itſelf and other things by its own ſhining. And as there is no diſcerning the things of this world but by the light of the world; ſo there is no diſcerning the things of the other world but by the light of the other world; that is, there is no diſcerning ſpiritual things but by the light and Spirit of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which God cauſeth to ſhine in the heart; which light ſearcheth the heart, and trieth the reins, and diſcovereth the moſt hidden things there.

Object. *But the heart is deceitful above all things, and Satan can transform himſelf into the likeneſs of an angel of light; ſo that he ſhines inwardly too by his feigned appearances: how then may I know the ſhinings of the true light of Chriſt's Spirit in my heart, from his falſe ſhinings and transformings?*

Anſw. God hath a witneſs in mens conſciences: For as God hath not left himſelf without witneſs outwardly, but all his works teſtify of him (his works of goodneſs, love, mercy, power, *&c.* teſtify of his goodneſs, love, mercy, power, *&c.*); ſo he hath not left himſelf without witneſs inwardly; but there is ſomewhat in men to teſtify of God, and for God, and againſt his enemy, and all deceitful appearances; which witneſs always ſpeaketh faithfully, and teſtifieth truth.

Therefore he that cometh to diſcern that, and mind that, ſhall find that near him which will always witneſs for God upon every occaſion, and againſt all the appearances and devices of the enemy.

Now no man can come to diſcern or diſtinguiſh in caſes of this nature, but as that which is of God, and for God, gives the judgment in him; and he that judgeth thus ſhall never judge according to the ſhews and appearances of things, but ſhall ſtill judge the true and righteous judgment.

Queſt. 9. *What is the nature and properties of the light of Chriſt's Spirit; and what will it do in the hearts of thoſe that turn to it, receive it, and walk in it?*

Anſw. It hath a moſt excellent nature and properties, and it will work wonderfully in the hearts of thoſe that receive it, and walk in it towards the redeeming and ſaving them from ſin, and the powers of darkneſs: ſo that following this light, and abiding and walking in it, they cannot be overcome by the enemy of their ſouls; but muſt needs conquer and overcome him. To inſtance in ſome:

Firſt, It hath an enlightening or manifeſting property. It will diſcover all that is of God, and likewiſe all that is againſt him. It will diſcover the very myſtery of death, and the moſt ſubtil workings of the enemy in the myſtery of darkneſs, and deceivableneſs of unrighteouſneſs. And it will diſcover the myſtery of life, and the myſtery of the way of holineſs. So that not only the precepts of holineſs, but the way of the precepts, the way of obeying the holy will and Spirit of God in every thing, is here learned.

Secondly, It hath an awakening property. This light will not let a man ſleep in ſin, or grow heavy and dull (if he hearken to it); but it awakens him that ſleeps: and whoever is truly awakened at any time, is awakened by this light; by the ſhining thereof in his heart; by the manifeſtation of God to his ſpirit by it. This teſtimony Paul gives, *Epheſ.* v. 13, 14. *Whatſoever doth make manifeſt is light.* Wherefore he ſaith, *Awake, thou that ſleepeſt*, &c.

Thirdly, It hath a quickening property. For it is the light of life, the light of Chriſt's Spirit, which is living and powerful; and it hath life and power in it, and quickeneth and raiſeth the man to whom it reacheth, and giveth him ability to ariſe from the dead.

Fourthly, It hath a cleanſing, a ſanctifying, a purifying property. Oh! how clean it makes within! The light is pure, and it maketh pure. All the defilement and corruption is in the darkneſs; none of it is in the light; but the light purgeth it away, where it findeth entertainment.

Fifthly, It hath an uniting and ſeparating property. It unites to God; it unites to that which is pure; and it ſeparates from ſin, Satan, darkneſs, and whatever is impure.

Sixthly, It hath a preſerving nature and property. It preſerves the man in whom it dwells; and where it hath power, and rules, it keeps out the darkneſs; ſo that darkneſs cannot break in where it hath place, and is kept to: nor can the mind break out from the Lord, which keeps in the ſenſe, ſavour, and ſeaſoning of the light of his Spirit.

Indeed time would fail me, to ſpeak of the excellent nature, virtues, and properties thereof; but come, taſte, and ſee how ſweet the light is, and what a pleaſant thing it is to behold the ſhinings of this Sun.

Queſt. 10. *Doth God viſit all men with this light?*

Anſw. Yes; as God loveth all men, and would have all men ſaved, ſo he viſiteth all men (more or leſs) with that which is able to diſcover the darkneſs to them, and to ſave them therefrom.

Queſt. 11. *What is the reaſon then that all men are not ſaved by it?*

Anſw. Becauſe they do not receive it, and join to it againſt the darkneſs; but join to the darkneſs, and hearken to the wiſdom and reaſonings thereof, againſt the appearances and diſcoveries of the light.

Queſt. 12. *How comes it that men do ſo?*

Anſw. From their love to the darkneſs and to the deeds of darkneſs; which they know they ſhould not love, becauſe they have ſomewhat near them, which often ſhews them the evil, both of the darkneſs that is in them, and of the deeds that come from it. So that this is the condemnation, that men love the darkneſs, cleave to the darkneſs, and follow the darkneſs; but hate the light, and turn from the light, which in the love and mercy of God follows them, to bring them out of love with the darkneſs, and to bring them into the ſenſe of, and fellowſhip with him in the light.

Queſt. 13. *How come ſome to love the light?*

Anſw. God affords a capacity therein to all, and God is Love; and from the flowings of his love, and aboundings of his mercy to all, are men begotten to him; and the obedient are kept by him in ſubjection to that, which many reſiſting the ſtrivings of his Spirit with them, are finally given up to hardneſs of heart, who turn from and hate the light. So that to God and his grace is to be attributed the ſalvation of all that are ſaved; and to man, his own deſtruction and periſhing from the way of life, notwithſtanding the tender viſitations of God, to recover and reconcile man to himſelf, through the blood of his Son.

Queſt. 14. *Againſt whom do they rebel, that rebel againſt the light?*

Anſw. They rebel againſt Chriſt, from whom the light comes; and will Chriſt ſave ſuch as rebel againſt him? Oh! that men did aright conſider this thing! for it is a greater matter to know, and be ſubject to the light of Chriſt's Spirit, as it ſhines from him in the heart, than men are aware of. Now that which diſcovers the hidden things of darkneſs in the heart, and reproves for it, is the light of Chriſt's Spirit, and not another. Oh! that all that deſire to know what and where the true light is, did underſtand ſo!

Queſt. 15. *What do they miſs of, who do not know nor heed the light of Chriſt's Spirit, nor mind the reproofs thereof in their hearts, but look on it as inferior in kind and nature to what it is?*

Anſw. They miſs of many great and precious privileges, which they that know it and have received it, and ſo walk in it, and are ſubject to it, do experience and are acquainted with.

Firſt, They miſs of knowing the ways of it: for in this light there are ways or paths of holineſs, paths of life, paths of righteouſneſs, paths of peace,

peace, paths of joy, paths of refreſhment and conſolation, wherein all theſe things are daily met with by thoſe that walk there; which they that know not the light (or rebel againſt the light) are not acquainted with. See *Job* xxiv. 13.

Secondly, They miſs of the lighting of their candle by it: for God lights his candle in the heart by this light, and by no other thing; ſo that in this his light, they whoſe candle is lighted by him, ſee light.

David had experience of this, and from that experience ſpake, *Thou wilt light my candle; the Lord my God will enlighten my darkneſs*, Pſal. xviii. 28. And Job had experience of this alſo, as thoſe words of his plainly ſignify, *Job* xxix. 2, *&c.* where he ſaith, *Oh! that I were as in the days paſt, when his candle ſhined upon my head, and by his light I walked through darkneſs.* And all the children of God, who in this day wait for the ſhinings of the light of his Spirit in their hearts, and are ſubject to him therein, they experience the ſame, and know the Word of life (which is nigh in the mouth and heart) to be *a lanthorn to the feet, and a light to the paths*, of the loweſt and meaneſt here.

Thirdly, They miſs of the ſending forth, or revelation of that from God, which leads to his holy hill and to his tabernacles, which David experienced and deſired more of, *Pſal.* xliii. 3. For, *who ſhall dwell in God's holy hill, or abide in his tabernacle?* Pſal. xv. 1. *He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteouſneſs, and ſpeaketh the truth in his heart*, &c. *he ſhall never be moved*, ver. 2. to the end, and *Iſai.* xxxiii. 15, *&c.* But how ſhall any come thither? Surely by God's light and truth ſent forth from his Spirit into their ſpirits. This is the way of aſcending thither in all ages and generations.

Fourthly, They ſlight that meaſure of light given them, and deſpiſe the day of ſmall things, and therefore miſs of the pouring forth of God's Spirit upon them, which is plentifully poured forth upon the ſons and daughters of the ſpiritual and heavenly Jeruſalem, in this day of God's viſiting the earth again after the apoſtaſy; bleſſed be the name of the Lord! And how comes it to be poured forth upon them? How comes wiſdom to pour out her ſpirit unto them? Why; they hearken to her reproofs, turning thereat, and forſaking that which they are reproved for, and ſo come into wiſdom's fear; and then wiſdom opens her ſecrets, and pours out her ſpirit, and makes known her words to thoſe that are ſubject to her reproofs and learn her fear, which is the fear of the New Covenant. See *Prov.* i. 23. He that receiveth the convincer of ſin, and followeth his leadings, out of the ſins he is convinced of (and into the paths of righteouſneſs and holineſs, into which he is the leader) cannot miſs of the Comforter, or of his comforts; for he is one and the ſame with the convincer or reprover.

XVI.

The Way to know one's Election, and to be fully aſſured of it; as alſo concerning Election itſelf.

DAVID ſaith; *the Lord hath ſet apart him that is godly for himſelf*, Pſal. iv. This is God's choice. God is the great potter, who formeth veſſels upon the wheel of his power; ſome to honour, ſome to diſhonour; but not before they were. Some he melteth and tendereth for ſalvation, who hearken to his voice; others he hardeneth and giveth up for deſtruction, who rebel againſt his Spirit. Oh! how ſhould all fear before him, who hath power over them, as the potter over the clay, that they ſhould reverence and obey him, leſt his power break them to pieces!

Now this is moſt certain: the holy man, the righteous man, the godly man, he that is renewed in the ſpirit of his mind; this is a veſſel of honour, fitted and choſen by God unto honour: but he that is corrupt, dead, filthy, polluted, *&c.* this is the veſſel which God rejects. For the righteous God loveth righteouſneſs for ever, and the holy God loveth holineſs for ever; and he that is holy and righteous, is of him, and choſen by him: but all that is unholy and unrighteous, is of another nature and ſpirit, and ſo rejected and caſt out by his pure nature and Spirit.

Therefore every one that would be accepted of the Lord and witneſs his choice, is to mind that, and be ſubject to that, whereby God fitteth veſſels for himſelf; which is the Holy Spirit, nature, and life of his Son, wherein every man is accepted (as he is called thither, gathered thither, and found there) and none rejected: but out of this every man is rejected, but none accepted; *for God is no reſpecter of perſons.*

He carried himſelf equally to every Jew under the old covenant; and he carrieth himſelf equally towards all who obey the call of his Spirit into the new and living covenant; ſo that the truth ſtandeth for ever, that in every nation, tongue and people, he that feareth God and worketh righteouſneſs, is accepted of him, and none elſe. And this is the great mercy and tender love of God to all men, that which bringeth into his fear, and teacheth and enableth to work righteouſneſs, is near every man, which is the word of faith, the word of life, the word of power, the word of reconciliation; ſo that no man need go far to ſeek out ſalvation: for Chriſt, the Saviour and ſalvation of God, is nigh to every man, in the light of that Holy Spirit of truth wherewith God viſiteth mankind, and wherein he ſpeaketh peace and reconciliation, both to them that are nigh, and to them that are afar off, as they hear the voice of the Spirit of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and learn ſubjection to it.

Give all diligence to make your calling and election ſure, ſaid the apoſtle Peter, 2 *Pet.* i. 10. How ſhall we do that, may ſome ſay? *Why, give all diligence*

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to add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godlineſs, and to godlineſs brotherly-kindneſs, and to brotherly-kindneſs love: for if theſe things be in you and abound, ye cannot be barren in the knowledge of Chriſt, but muſt needs be fruitful. Well, but what then? What if they be fruitful? Why, if they be fruitful, then (to be ſure) they are choſen branches; for God caſts off none but that which is dry, barren, dead, and unfruitful. Feel life, which is active and bears fruit, thou feeleſt the choice of God, thou anſwereſt the end of thy call, *&c.* and herein as thou comeſt to ſettlement and eſtabliſhment, thou wilt find thy calling and election made ſure to thee, and an entrance miniſtered to thee abundantly into the everlaſting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. For Chriſt hath the key of the kingdom, and ſhutteth out no ſuch as theſe, but giveth them further admittance day by day. And ſo by this means thou wilt witneſs tranſlation further and further, out of the kingdom of darkneſs into the kingdom of God's dear Son, and an inheritance and poſſeſſion of life and glory in meaſure; which will be an earneſt to thee of the full inheritance in due time, and a ſeal upon thy heart unto the day of full redemption: yea, thou mayeſt then alſo come to ſee how thou waſt loved and choſen in Chriſt before the foundation of the world, through obedience unto, and ſanctification of the Spirit, manifeſted in time, 2 *Theſſ.* ii. 13. (For known unto God are all his works from the beginning, before ever any of them were wrought.) If thou feel that which cometh forth from the Lord to call and gather to him, and to renew and ſanctify, and make fit for him, and to make thee fruitful (from the holy root and power of life) in that which is good; this is enough for thee, and thy ſoul is ſafe and bleſſed here: for here thou knoweſt that, and art in that bleſſed ſeed of promiſe, into which all that are gathered and abide, are bleſſed in and with it.

Now as concerning election itſelf, obſerve this; that it is in Chriſt, and not out of him. For it was the intent of God to honour his Son, even as his Son honoured him: and this was the honour which God gave him, *That he ſhould be his ſalvation to the ends of the earth; that whoſoever believed on him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life.* That he ſhould be the way for all mankind to come to the Father, through faith in him; *that as in Adam all died, ſo in Chriſt all might be made alive*; and as in Adam all men were ſhut up in death and condemnation, ſo the free gift might come upon all, and the way of life and redemption be opened to all, in him.

Mind the figure, the brazen ſerpent, which was not lifted up that a certain number might be healed, and no more; but that every one that was wounded, every one that was ſtung with ſerpents, might look up and be healed.

So was Chriſt lifted up, that every ſinner that was ſtung with ſin and the ſerpent, might look up to the phyſician of ſouls, and receive virtue and healing from him, according to that precious ſcripture, *Look unto me, and be*

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ye ſaved, all the ends of the earth. And whoever is a-thirſt, let him come; and whoever will, let him come and drink of the water of life freely. Yea, God ſtands ready, by his Holy Spirit and quickening power, which is near men, to kindle the true thirſt in them, and to make them truly willing. To open it yet further;

There is predeſtination, election, calling, juſtifying, glorifying: predeſtination unto holineſs, election in that which is holy, calling out of darkneſs into light, juſtifying and glorifying in the light, through the renewing and ſanctification of the Spirit. All theſe God ordereth and manageth according to his good will, and according as he hath purpoſed in himſelf; although he be not the decreer, nor author of ſin or rebellion againſt himſelf, which is the cauſe of the creature's condemnation.

Thus all things are as preſent with God before they were: for God did foreknow Adam's fall (though he was not therefore the author of it) before it came to paſs; and he foreknew how his power, and love, and mercy, ſhould work towards men and for men, in and through Chriſt; and how far he would viſit men therewith, and how far men would reſiſt and ſtrive againſt his Holy and good Spirit; and he determined how long his Spirit ſhould ſtrive with nations and perſons: for with ſome he would long wait to be gracious; with others he would be quicker and more ſevere, according to their provocations.

Now his love, his mercy, his power, his good Spirit, are his own; and he may ſhew forth the operations of them towards men according to his pleaſure; and who may ſay unto him, What doſt thou? May he not do with his own what he pleaſeth (who is *good and righteous in all his ways*)? and becauſe he may ſhew mercy as long as he will, and harden as ſoon as he will (as he ſees cauſe). May it not be truly ſaid, *That he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy; and whom he will, he hardeneth?* But that he hardeneth any, without firſt giving them a day of mercy and viſitations of mercy, following them with mercy, and forbearing them in mercy, and ſo by the riches of his goodneſs, forbearance, and long-ſuffering, leading them to repentance, that they might eſcape his wrath, and the dread of his powerful vengeance, becauſe of ſin: I ſay, that God hardens any before he hath dealt thus with them, from a meer will in himſelf, becauſe he would deſtroy the moſt and far greateſt part of men; this the ſcriptures no-where teſtify to, but abundantly teſtify againſt. For how long did God ſtrive with the old world, even to have ſaved them, whom afterwards he did deſtroy? And how did he ſtrive with that people of the Jews (yea, and with other nations alſo, though they might ſeem caſt off)? *As I live, ſaith the Lord* (and he ſpeaketh his heart), *I deſire not the death of the wicked, but rather that they might return and live. I am not the deſtroyer, I am the Saviour; and my delight is not to deſtroy, but to ſave. O Iſrael! thy deſtruction is of thyſelf; but in me is thy help.* And no man's blood will lie at God's door but at his own.

Therefore as God hath prepared a Saviour, ſo there is no want of love, or mercy, or power on his part, to draw men to the Saviour; but this is the condemnation, that men harden themſelves againſt the drawings of his Spirit, and againſt the operation of his holy light and power, when it appeareth, and is willing to work in and upon their hearts. This is not the condemnation of men, that light doth not ſhine in their hearts; but that they love the darkneſs more than the light, which appears and ſhines in them, and is there witneſſing againſt and drawing from the darkneſs. And ſo when it ſhall at laſt be made manifeſt, how light hath appeared to all men, and God's Spirit therein, and thereby ſtriven with all men, and how they have refuſed, and would not be turned from their darkneſs to the light of the Lord; every mouth will be ſtopped before him, and all men that periſh, juſtly condemned for refuſing and neglecting ſo great ſalvation: for the light of the ſun of God's everlaſting day, and the ſound of his Spirit of life, viſiting dark man, reacheth throughout all the earth, and his voice and words to the ends of the world.

XVII.

Some Obſervations concerning the Prieſthood of CHRIST, *from ſeveral Paſſages in the Epiſtle to the* HEBREWS.

Obſerv. 1. WHO is the apoſtle and high-prieſt of our profeſſion? It is Jeſus Chriſt, the Son of God, whom God hath appointed heir of all things, by whom he made the worlds; and who is the expreſs image of his Father's ſubſtance, *&c. Heb.* i. and *chap.* iii. 1.

Obſerv. 2. Why this high-prieſt was to ſuffer death? which was, that he might taſte death for every man, and ſo through ſuffering become a perfect Saviour, or perfect captain of ſalvation, to all the ſons that were to be brought by him to glory, *chap.* ii. 9, 10.

Obſerv. 3. Why he partook of fleſh and blood? one reaſon whereof was, becauſe the children (and that therein he might ſhew them an example of righteouſneſs, that he might condemn himſelf in the fleſh), were partakers of fleſh and blood; for that was the very ground or reaſon that he took part of the ſame: another reaſon was that which was mentioned before; that he might taſte death, and through death deſtroy him who had the power of death, and ſo break open the priſon-doors, and deliver thoſe who were captives under him, *chap.* ii. 14, 15.

Obſerv. 4. Why he was tempted; and why in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren? which was, *that he might be a merciful and faithful high-prieſt in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the ſins of the people.* For his own ſuffering under temptations (even the ſenſe thereof) renders him merciful, tender, faithful, and ready to help and ſuccour his in all their temptations, *chap.* ii. 17, 18.

Mark;

Mark; Chriſt was not only to die, and ſo offer up a ſacrifice of atonement, but he was alſo to make reconciliation by it ever afterwards for his children (in caſe of tranſgreſſion) whenever occaſion ſhould be. So ſaith John, *If any man ſin, we have an advocate with the Father* (to plead for the forgiving and blotting out of the ſin); *and he is the propitiation (or reconciliation) for our ſins*; as the old tranſlation renders it, 1 *John* ii. 1, 2.

Obſerv. 5. Chriſt, our apoſtle and high-prieſt, is as faithful over all his houſe as Moſes was over his. There is not one of the children, not one of his family, but he will teach: not one ſoul belonging to him, but he will ſuccour, being tempted; nor any one, but he will be an advocate and reconciliation for (in caſe of ſin), in and according to the way that God hath appointed, *Heb.* iii. 2.

Obſerv. 6. Who are Chriſt's houſe? over whom is he an apoſtle and high-prieſt? It is over his own houſe; whoſe houſe are all ſuch as are called by him, if they receive and hold faſt that which gives a right to him, and intereſt in him, *chap.* iii. 6. and *ver.* 14. For as under the law, the high-prieſt was prieſt only over the outward Iſrael, the Jews natural; ſo under the goſpel, Chriſt is appointed of God high-prieſt over the inward Jews, the Jews ſpiritual.

Obſerv. 7. How this apoſtle or high-prieſt of our profeſſion doth work in the hearts of his family or houſhold? which is by the Word of Life, by the Word of his own eternal power, which pierceth deep, and divideth between ſoul and ſpirit, joints and marrow, diſcerning and judging every thought and intent, and bringing every high reaſoning and imagination into captivity, that the heart, ſoul, mind and ſpirit, with all the thoughts and intents thereof, may become ſubject to his Spirit and power, *chap.* iv. 12.

Obſerv. 8. What an advantage we have, by having ſuch an high-prieſt (as was tempted like us, and touched with the ſenſe of our infirmities) of coming boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need! For he who experimentally knew what the weakneſs of our fleſh is, and what it was to be tempted therein, and how needful and ſeaſonable help from his Father then was; ſurely he cannot but be ready to give out, and multiply grace and mercy to his in the time of their need, *chap.* iv. 15, 16.

Obſerv. 9. How Chriſt came to be an high-prieſt? which was not by his own taking the honour to himſelf, but by God's glorifying him with the call thereto, *chap.* v. 4, 5.

Obſerv. 10. How God fitted Chriſt, and made him a perfect high-prieſt? which was by preparing for him a body of fleſh, and exerciſing him in the days of his fleſh with many trials and temptations; and at laſt with a bitter baptiſm, and cup of death, in which he felt and bare the griefs and ſorrows of his people, and cried mightily to his Father, and was heard in that he feared: and ſo having himſelf perfectly learned obedience to his Father, he knows how to become the author of eternal ſalvation to all that obey him. For Chriſt, who was heard and ſaved from death in his obedience to his Father, is appointed to be the leader and Saviour of his people, to ſave and

redeem them in their obedience unto him, the leader into, and in the way and paths of life, *chap.* v. 7, 8, 9.

Obſerv. 11. Where Chriſt mediates for his people? which is within the veil, in the heavenly place, in the holieſt of all, where the anchor of our hope reacheth to him and faſteneth upon him, and there remains ſure and ſtedfaſt; ſo that we are ſtayed upon him, the rock of life and power, againſt all the ſtorms and tempeſts of the powers of darkneſs, both inward and outward, *chap.* vi. 19, 20.

Obſerv. 12. After what order Chriſt was made an high-prieſt; which was after the order of Melchizedeck, who was king of righteouſneſs, and king of peace, even after an holy and heavenly order: not after the order of the earthly prieſthood, the high-prieſts whereof were taken from amongſt men, but after his order who was made mention of; without father, without mother, without deſcent (for who can declare his generation?) without beginning of days or end of life, *chap.* vii. 1, 2, 3. and 15.

Obſerv. 13. That this prieſt put an end to and changed the laws of the other earthly, ſhadowy prieſthood of Levi, by which perfection was not, that he might bring in that prieſthood of his own, by which perfection was to be, *chap.* vii. *ver.* 11, &c.

Obſerv. 14. How Chriſt was made prieſt after a different manner from the prieſts of the law: for they were made prieſts after the law of a carnal commandment; but Chriſt was not made prieſt ſo, but after the power of an endleſs life, *chap.* vii. 16.

Obſerv. 15. That the work of Chriſt's prieſthood continueth until it be finiſhed; that is, till this high-prieſt hath ſaved all whom he is to ſave, which is thus: as in all ages the Father draweth ſouls to him, ſo he is to ſave them; to deſtroy their enemies, to blot out their ſins, to break down what ſtands between God and them, and ſo to bring them into the true oneneſs; for God will never be reconciled to his enemy the devil, nor to man while in union with him, *chap.* vii. 24, 25.

Obſerv. 16. That this high-prieſt needeth not to offer many ſacrifices to atone by, as the prieſts under the law needed to do often: for he was a perfect prieſt, and offered up one perfect, ſpotleſs ſacrifice; and is a propitiation for the ſins of the whole world, *chap.* vii. 27, 28.

Obſerv. 17. What ſanctuary is Chriſt the high-prieſt and miniſter of? which is, of that ſanctuary and true tabernacle which the Lord pitcheth, and not man, *chap.* viii. 2.

Obſerv. 18. What he hath to offer? for every high-prieſt was ordained to offer both gifts and ſacrifices. He hath the heavenly gifts and ſacrifices to offer; even all the gifts and ſpiritual ſacrifices that are revived and brought forth by him in the holy place, even in his temple or ſpiritual houſe within the veil; he is to offer them all up to his Father, *ver.* 3, &c.

Obſerv. 19. What covenant he is mediator of? even a better covenant than the prieſts under the law were mediators of, which is eſtabliſhed upon better promiſes: a covenant, wherein there is no defectiveneſs or imperfection,

wherein

wherein all ſhall certainly be redeemed and ſaved by him, who come to him in the drawing of the Father, and abide with him. For in ſuch God will put his laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts; and *will be their God, and they ſhall be his people*; and will ſo teach them, that they ſhall need no other teacher; but ſhall all know him from the leaſt to the greateſt. For as men come into this covenant, God will be merciful to their unrighteouſneſs, and their ſins and their iniquities will he remember no more, *ver.* 6. to the end.

Obſerv. 20. That Chriſt is not an high-prieſt of the figures of things, but of the good things themſelves (which came in the time of reformation), even of the perfect covenant, the perfect tabernacle, and of the worſhip and ſervice in Spirit and truth; where the perfect refiner (by his Spirit of judgment and burning) purifieth the ſons of Levi, that they may offer to God an offering in righteouſneſs, *chap.* ix. 9, 10, 11. and *Mal.* iii. 3.

So that there is a different ſtate witneſſed by the people of God in this covenant, from what was witneſſed by the Jews in the other covenant: for what was amiſs there, is reformed here by the Spirit and power of our God, in all thoſe that abide and walk in this covenant; who live in the Spirit and walk in the Spirit, and do not fulfill the luſts of the fleſh, which grieve and provoke God's Holy Spirit.

Obſerv. 21. How Chriſt came to obtain eternal redemption for all his? which was by his blood. For as the high-prieſt under the law entered into the holy place of that tabernacle made with hands, by the blood of goats and calves, and ſo obtained remiſſion for the ſins of that outward people the Jews; ſo Chriſt entered into the truly holy place, into the greater and more perfect tabernacle, and there by his blood obtained remiſſion for all that ſhould receive repentance from him, and believe in him, *ver.* 11, 12.

Obſerv. 22. How Chriſt purifieth, purgeth, and ſanctifieth the people with his blood? which is, by ſprinkling it upon them. For under the law, in that outward covenant, the unclean were ſprinkled with the blood of the ſacrifice, that they might be ſanctified to the purifying of the fleſh; and under the goſpel, in this inward covenant, believers are ſprinkled with the blood of the Lamb, that their conſciences might be purged from dead works to ſerve the living God, as his cleanſed, holy, renewed people, *ver.* 13, 14.

Obſerv. 23. For what cauſe Chriſt was mediator of the New Teſtament? which was, that by means of death for the redemption of the tranſgreſſors under the firſt Teſtament, they which are called might receive the promiſe of eternal inheritance, *ver.* 15. For God hath made Chriſt a propitiation for all men, both Jews and Gentiles, that through faith in his blood, his righteouſneſs might be declared for the remiſſion of ſins that are paſt, through the forbearance of God, that he might be juſt, and a juſtifier of him who is of the faith of Jeſus, *Rom.* iii. 15, 16. So that they that were under the firſt covenant, hearkening unto him, and believing in him, were juſtified from all things, from which they could not be juſtified by the law of Moſes, *Acts* xiii. 39.

Obſerv.

Obſerv. 24. The neceſſity of Chriſt's death, which was, becauſe he was to make way by his own blood into the holieſt, to appear before God for us; and to ſprinkle the heavenly things with the blood of a ſacrifice, of an higher and better nature than the blood of bulls and goats was; for that was the blood of the covenant, which was to paſs away, but he was to ſprinkle his with the blood of the everlaſting covenant; and by this his death and blood (ſprinkled upon the hearts of his) his covenant comes to be of force, *ver.* 16. to 25. and *chap.* xiii. 20, 21.

Obſerv. 25. That this high-prieſt need not often offer ſacrifices, to put away ſin, as the prieſts of the law did; becauſe this one offering is ſufficient, and the blood thereof ſprinkled upon the conſcience, is able to purge away dead works, wherever it is ſprinkled. There needeth not any other offering, nor any other blood to do it; but all that is now further needed, or to be expected by *his*, is his appearing the *ſecond* time, without ſin, unto ſalvation, in the pure virtue, power, and life of his own Spirit, *ver.* 25. to the end.

Obſerv. 26. What it was, that was the thing of great value with the Father, in Chriſt giving up himſelf to death? It was his obedience. He did obey his Father in all things, not doing his own will, but the will of him that ſent him. *He was obedient to death, even the death of the croſs:* and ſo, as by one man's diſobedience, death came upon all; ſo by the obedience of *one*, the free gift came upon all, which free gift is unto life; for life comes upon all that come to him, and believe in him, through the free gift, which is freely tendered to, and come upon all; *chap.* x. 7. *Rom.* v. 18, 19.

Obſerv. 27. That God took away ſacrifices, and burnt-offerings, which were appointed by the old covenant, that he might eſtabliſh this obedience among all his children. Chriſt led the way, and all are to follow him in the new obedience, and to walk in newneſs of Spirit before the Lord, *ver.* 9.

Obſerv. 28. That we are ſanctified by the ſame will, by which Chriſt was ſanctified, or ſanctifieth himſelf. In ſubjection to the ſame will, which the head obeyed (even in denying themſelves, taking up the croſs to their own wills, and ſubmitting to God's) are the members ſanctified. The Spirit of God works them into holineſs by this will of God, and through the offering of the body of Jeſus Chriſt once, *ver.* 10. *John* xvii. 19.

So mark: there is the will of God, the offering up the body of Jeſus, the pouring out the Spirit of grace, the new covenant, and faith in Chriſt, *&c.* All theſe tend to work out one and the ſame thing, and they all concur thereto, in their ſeveral orders and places.

Obſerv. 29. That as this high-prieſt ſanctifies men, ſo he perfects them; and when they are fully ſanctified, then they are for-ever perfected; but till then, Chriſt, the high-prieſt of our profeſſion, hath ſomewhat to do upon them towards the perfecting of them, that he may preſent them ſpotleſs, and blameleſs to his Father, *ver.* 14, 15.

Obſerv.

Obſerv. 30. How the apoſtle proves, *That by this one offering, Chriſt hath for-ever perfected them that are ſanctified.* He proves it thus: by this offering the covenant is eſtabliſhed, wherein is the putting and writing God's law in the heart and mind, the remiſſion of ſins.

So, come into this covenant, come under this high-prieſt; there is no more remembering of ſin there, but perfect forgiveneſs through this one offering, and ſo no more need of any more ſacrificing or offering for ſins to ſuch, *ver.* 15.—19. For *he ſhall ſprinkle many nations with the blood of this one offering*, Iſa. lii. 15.

Obſerv. 31. The great privilege of thoſe, who do indeed believe in Chriſt, and are ſprinkled with the blood, and how they are to improve and make uſe of that privilege.

Firſt, They have liberty, confidence, or boldneſs, to enter into the holieſt by the blood of Jeſus, *ver.* 19. What is more holy than God's Spirit? Is not that the moſt holy place? Why, there *they* are to worſhip; for they that worſhip the Father in the new covenant, or according to the new covenant, muſt worſhip him in the Spirit, and in the truth; yea, and muſt alſo live in the Spirit, and walk in the Spirit, which is the place of everlaſting reſt, and land of the living.

Secondly, Take notice how they come into the holieſt, which is by the new and living way, which Chriſt hath prepared, or conſecrated through his fleſh, *ver.* 20.

Thirdly, They have an high-prieſt there over the houſe of God, who appears before God in the holieſt, and ſtands ready there to perform all the offices of prieſt-hood for his houſhold, *ver.* 21.

Fourthly, There is an orderly way of drawing nigh to God, and worſhipping him in the holieſt? There is a certain manner, after which believers are to approach, and draw nigh to God: which is; 1. With a true heart. 2. In fullneſs of faith, or in full aſſurance of faith; not waveringly, but as thoſe that are called of God, and ſhall be helped by him, and accepted of him through their high-prieſt. 3. In purity of conſcience and converſation, having their hearts ſprinkled from an evil conſcience, and their bodies waſhed with pure water, *ver.* 22, 23. and *Pſal.* xxvi. 6. *Chriſt came by water and blood*; ſo here is both the water and the blood, according to the figures thereof, under the law.

Obſerv. 32. Whither they came in the apoſtles days, who knew Chriſt as their high-prieſt and mediator, and who partook of the blood of ſprinkling? They came to ſpiritual Mount Sion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jeruſalem, *Heb.* xii. 22.

Obſerve likewiſe where they walked, who felt the virtue of Chriſt's blood cleanſing them; which was *in the light, as God is in the light*, 1 John i. 7.

Now, what light is that which the redeemed are to walk in? Is it not the light of the Lamb's city, the new Jeruſalem? Is it not the light thereof, that

that the nations of them that are ſaved muſt walk in? *Rev.* xxi. 24. Yea, this light, this city, and the holy waters of the ſanctuary, which flow and ſtream from the river of life there, were in meaſure known and experienced in the days of old, which David prayed for, and experienced a ſenſe of, *Pſal.* xliii. 3. and xlvi. 4. Yea, he knew alſo the blood of the everlaſting covenant, praying and waiting to be ſprinkled and cleanſed therewith, *Pſal.* li. 6. For he looked through the outward figure, to what his ſoul needed to purge and waſh it inwardly; which outward hyſſop, or outward water of purification, he knew would not do; for he that ſaw through the outward ſacrifices, to the inward, could not chuſe but ſee through theſe alſo.

But that power, virtue, and life of God's Spirit, which could *create a clean heart, and renew a right ſpirit in him*, and bring him into God's preſence, where he might feel the upholdings of his free Spirit, and partake of the joy of God's ſalvation and deliverance from that which had defiled him; this was it he prayed for; knowing aſſuredly, he ſhould here meet with the true hyſſop, and water of life, and blood of the covenant, which purgeth the heart and conſcience from dead works, and maketh it whiter than the ſnow in God's ſight, *ver.* 10, 11, 12. For he that delighted not in ſacrifice, nor burnt-offerings, neither could he delight in hyſſop, or water, or blood, outward or natural; but in that which melteth the heart, and purifieth the conſcience, from that which is dead and unclean, in that is God's delight; and in that which is melted, broken, and purified by it, *ver.* 16, 17.

Obſerv. Laſtly, That there is a ſin unto death, a kind of ſinning for which there is no ſacrifice (but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, to deſtroy and devour the adverſaries, *ver.* 26, 27.), which is a wilful deſpiſing this covenant; which he that doth, muſt die without mercy; as he that deſpiſed Moſes's law did, *ver.* 28, 29. For the Lord will revenge this ſin, whereſoever he finds it; and ſuch ſhall know, that it is a *fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God*, when he comes to judge them, *ver.* 30, 31.

XVIII.

A brief Relation of the Eſtate or Condition the Lord found many of us in, when he came to viſit us, and make known to us the bleſſed Miniſtration of his Spirit and Power, and of ſome of his Dealings with us, in inſtructing and nurturing us up therein; with a few Words of Exhortation.

THERE are chambers of imagery in many people; and ſtrong-holds, and reaſonings, and imaginations, and high thoughts, exalted above the pure ſeed and meaſure of life in their hearts. For every true Chriſtian, every

every true believer, hath received ſomewhat of Chriſt's Spirit, ſome proportion of grace and truth from the fullneſs of Chriſt, which is as leaven and ſalt, to leaven the heart, and ſeaſon the mind and ſpirit with.

But all do not diſtinctly know this, nor are all that do know it ſubject to it; ſo that this doth not lead, and command, and rule in all; but there is ſomewhat which holds captive, and the enemy of the ſoul hath the rule and dominion in many mens ſpirits, profeſſing godlineſs; whereby the ſeed is kept under in them, and their ſouls kept back from that redemption and deliverance, which they ſhould partake of, in and with the ſeed. So many talk of the goſpel (and ſpeak great words of Chriſt, and redemption by him) who know not *immortality brought to light*, nor the dead raiſed by it, to live to God and praiſe his name.

Now in theſe chambers of imagery, in theſe ſtrong-holds, there are many pleaſant pictures, many images of the heavenly things, which men form in their minds, from their own apprehendings and conceivings upon the ſcriptures. For men reading the ſcriptures, not in the life, Spirit, and power which gave them forth, but with that which is natural, they come not to the true, pure, heavenly, living knowledge; but only obtain a natural knowledge, according to which they believe and worſhip; and ſo fall down before, and according to, the apprehenſions and imaginations of their own minds; and ſo one believes and worſhips one way, and another believes and worſhips another way. And truly, here men worſhip they know not what; but they that are the true Jews, know what they worſhip; for ſalvation is of the true Jews, who worſhip neither at this mountain, nor at the other mountain; but only in Spirit, and in truth, even in the life and power of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

Thus it is with all men in their ſeveral profeſſions of religion in the darkneſs, in the apoſtaſy from the true life and power, which all ſorts have erred and wandered from, but few have returned to. Ah! few have found the pearl of price, which hath been long loſt; but have contented themſelves with a literal relation and knowledge concerning the pearl, without knowing and poſſeſſing the pearl itſelf. Yea, indeed, this was the ſtate of darkneſs the Lord found us all in, when he came to viſit us; for the ſtrong man armed had his ſtrong-holds in us, whereby he held us in the bands of death, and kept us captive, and free from that righteous life and power which we thirſted after. But when the ſtronger than he came, he battered his ſtrength, he aſſaulted and took his ſtrong-holds; he brake all his reaſonings, knowledge, wiſdom, and ſubtilty, wherein he truſted, and made ſpoil of his goods, and delivered the captives from under his hand.

For, indeed, when the mighty day of the Lord came upon us, and his pure heavenly light ſhone in our hearts, God ſearched Jeruſalem as with candles, diſcovering the moſt hidden things of Eſau's nature inwardly; and then all the knowledge and wiſdom, all the underſtanding and experiences, which were treaſured up in us out of the pure life, out of the truth, which

lives and abides, they were found dead, and condemned as dead in us, and ſo caſt forth, as the treaſures of Egypt and Babylon, and thrown to the batts and moles; who either creep up and down in the earthly nature, or ſoar aloft in the dark dreams and imaginations of the night of darkneſs and apoſtaſy.

For when the true light ſhines, it diſcovers what the day is, and what the night is; and the things which are of the day, and the things alſo which are of the night.

Now when the Lord thus appeared unto us, and cauſed the light of his Son to ſhine in us, many of us quickly came out of Egypt, turning our backs upon the darkneſs; and went willingly into the wilderneſs, to travel along with the Lord, and to be exerciſed and fitted there for the good land, the land of the redeemed, the land of the living, the land which flows with milk and honey (which is pure heavenly food), whither they that come, find the excellent vine, which bears the heavenly grapes, of which is the wine of the kingdom, and the true olive, which yields ſweet oil; and houſes which they built not, wherein are many manſions of reſt and pure glory; and vineyards which they planted not, wherein the living plants grow, and ſpring up in the preſence of the Lord, who dwells among his, and walks in the gardens and holy plantations.

But there were others, who were loth to come out of Egypt, or to forſake the idols and way of worſhip in Egypt and Babylon, whom the enemy long held captive in their thoughts and reaſonings, and in the diſputings of their minds.

Now theſe ſuffered much, and felt many of the ſtrokes and dreadful judgments of the Lord, poured out upon that ſpirit in them, which held them captive, and upon them for their hearkenings and joinings to the ſubtil twinings, and entangling reaſonings and ſuggeſtions of that ſpirit. For the enemy uſeth all his ſtrength and ſubtilty to the utmoſt, to hold his captives in ſubjection to him, and under his power, as long as ever he can. He keeps every hold, he ſtrengthens every reaſoning, and every thought and imagination of the mind againſt God's call, againſt the appearances of his Spirit in the heart. *Do not go yet (ſaith the enemy); thy way is not yet plain before thee, thy light is not yet clear enough; the reaſon or conſideration which is objected, is not yet fully anſwered. Thou art to try all things; but there is this, or that, or the other conſideration, which thou haſt not yet tried, or conſidered of fully, and ſatisfactorily to thy own heart.*

Thus many pure drawings of the Father (in which there was light ſufficient for the ſoul to follow) have been loſt, and the ſoul thereby hath miſſed of the hand which was put forth (in the tender love of the Lord) to help and ſave it.

Queſt. But ſome may ſay; *What have ye learned of the Lord more than we, or more than ye knew before, when ye walked among us, and practiſed the ordinances which we practiſe? Have not we good directions from the ſcriptures?*

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Do not we practiſe them? And is not the Spirit of God in the ſcriptures? are they not joined together; and ſo, having the ſcriptures, we have the Spirit of God too?

Anſw. It is not in my heart to enter into diſpute now, though I am ſenſible of the darkneſs from whence this objection ariſeth: and oh! that it were removed from their hearts in whom it is; for truly, we ourſelves were once there; and when we were there, we knew not the ſcriptures aright, as we ought to know, nor the power of God! But to anſwer plainly and directly to the thing itſelf:

There are *three* things I ſhall mention (beſides many others, which might be mentioned) which the Lord hath taught us, ſince his Spirit and power hath appeared to us, and led us out of the darkneſs, towards, and into, the land of light; which are theſe. He hath taught us to believe, he hath taught us to obey, and he hath taught us to pray to him in the name of his Son.

Object. *Why; did ye never learn theſe before?*

Anſw. No, not ſo as the Lord hath now taught us. There was indeed ſome true faith from the true ſeed in us, and ſome true obedience, and ſome pure breathings to the Father, in the days of our former profeſſion; but we knew not the root from whence they came, ſo as to turn it, and abide in it; and ſo the holy deſires, and true ſenſe in us, were often made a prey of, and we ſtill in want and penury in a ſtrange land, and could not enjoy (poſſeſs or retain) what was freely given us of our God and Father in Chriſt; but ſtill a fleſhly wiſdom, a fleſhly comprehenſion, a fleſhly nature, mind, and knowledge (which in that day went with us for ſpiritual, as well as it doth ſo with others now), pecked up over it; and ſo Hagar was in the houſe, and would be miſtreſs there, but was not caſt out with her ſeed. Oh! who can read, and truly underſtand this! But when the Lord turned us to the light of his Spirit, and by the light and power of his Spirit brake the bonds and chains of darkneſs in us; then we could believe in him who appeared, and (in the ſtrength and virtue received from him) we could obey him, yielding our members inſtruments of righteouſneſs to do his will; and in the Spirit of the Son (which we then received in the faith, even the heavenly Spirit, the moſt excellent Spirit) we could pray to the Father; firſt, ſighing and groaning before him, afterwards pouring out our requeſts and ſupplications to him, with giving of thanks.

Queſt. *How did the Lord teach you to believe? Or what did he teach you to believe now, more than before?*

Anſw. It is written in the prophets, *all thy children ſhall be taught of the Lord*; and in the new covenant it is promiſed, *they ſhall all know me, from the leaſt to the greateſt.*

Now, as we were brought by the Lord into the light of this covenant, we were taught thus to know him, and to believe in him; and his Son, as thus made known. So that we knew the Father revealing the Son, and the

Son revealing the Father; and our hearts were drawn to believe in both, as they were both revealed in us, and to us, and the revealing was in the Spirit of both, in the light of both, in the life of both, in the power of both; which Spirit, which light, which life, which power is one; ſo that he that indeed knows the Son, knows the Father alſo; and he that indeed knows the Father, knows the Son alſo.

Very deep and weighty was that anſwer of Chriſt to Philip, when Philip ſaid; *ſhew us the Father, and it ſufficeth. Haſt thou not ſeen me, Philip? ſaid Chriſt. How is it that thou ſayeſt, ſhew us the Father? He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father alſo.* Are they not one nature, one wiſdom, one power, one pure eternal being? Can the *one* poſſibly be ſeen, and not the *other?* Though they may be diſtinguiſhed in manifeſtation, in the hearts where they are received; is it poſſible they ſhould be divided and ſeparated the one from the other?

Thoſe that thus apprehend, plainly manifeſt, that they never received the true knowledge of the Father and Son; but have only notions and apprehenſions of man's wiſdom concerning them.

So now to us there is but one God and Father, *Of whom are all things, and we in him*; and *one Lord Jeſus Chriſt, by whom are all things, and we by him*; and but one Spirit and power of life, which we have received of the Son and Father, through which we believe, and lay hold on the pure eternal power and ſtrength of the Almighty, which redeems and ſaves the ſoul; and ſo believing on him, who raiſed up our Lord Jeſus Chriſt from the dead, here we meet with juſtification, and are at peace with our God, laying hold on his ſtrength, and being held by it.

And ſo here, in the new covenant, under the teachings of God's Spirit, we witneſs that ſcripture fulfilled in our hearts, *Iſa.* xxvii. 4, 5.

Queſt. *How did the Lord teach you to obey? Ye do not obey the ten commandments; ye neither learned, nor teach them: but all that ye obey is all light and ſpirit within; which may be a ſpirit of deluſion, for aught we know; and we believe it is ſo, becauſe we do not find it agreeing with the ſcriptures, nor you in the practice of the ordinances of Chriſt, according to the ſcriptures.*

Anſw. That harſh ſpirit, which in this manner objecteth, is not very fit nor likely to receive or embrace information, from the meek and tender Spirit of the Lamb; but there are ſome, who are broken and tendered, and fit to receive impreſſion and information from the Holy Spirit and power of our God; and to them, and for their ſakes, are my anſwers given forth and directed. So, for their ſakes, I ſhall proceed in plainneſs, and evidence of truth, anſwering, as the Lord ſhall open my heart.

Truly, the Lord hath taught us obedience, ſo as we never learned before; putting his laws into our minds, and writing them in our hearts, and giving us his good Spirit to dwell in us, to quicken and help us to obey and perform his holy laws. And thoſe two commandments (on which the whole law and prophets hang); to wit, *To love God with all our hearts*, and

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our neighbours as ourſelves, as taught by Moſes and Chriſt; yea, the very ſubſtance of the law written in tables of ſtone, he hath inwardly written in our hearts, and taught us to obſerve and obey; ſo that we have no other God but him, who brought us out of ſpiritual Egypt, by his out-ſtretched arm and holy power, revealed inwardly for us, as it was outwardly for that people of the Jews, whom God redeemed out of outward Egypt.

Indeed before, other Lords had rule over us, and ſomewhat ſtill got between us and our God; ſo that, when we were without the limits of the pure power, we were idolaters in God's ſight, though we then knew it not; but now we make mention of the Lord's name only.

So the Lord hath taught us not to make any image, or likeneſs of his appearance, or of the heavenly things; not to form any thing in our minds from the ſcriptures; but to wait on God, to know his truths revealed in their own pure nature.

The Lord hath likewiſe taught us to ſanctify his name, which he hath made known to us, and not to take it in vain; but to reverence his holy power and Spirit, in every degree of its appearance; for the name of our God is living, and is only ſanctified, and not taken in vain, by thoſe that are living.

Alſo the Lord hath taught us to obſerve and keep his holy ſabbath, and day of reſt (even the day of the goſpel-reſt, for that is the ſabbath now), not doing our own works, or thinking our own thoughts, or kindling a fire of ourſelves, on his holy day; but ceaſing from our own willing and running, and from all the works of the fleſh; and waiting to feel him work in us, both *to will and to do of his good pleaſure*; which works in the Spirit (works of faith, of love, of mercy, *&c.*) break not the goſpel-reſt or ſabbath.

And having thus learned the duties of the firſt table (the Lord having circumciſed our hearts to *love the Lord our God with all our hearts*, and to exalt him, his Spirit, his nature, his will, his name, his day in us), the duties of the ſecond table are eaſy and natural to us, and we cannot but *do to others as we would be done unto*; and ſo love and honour all men in the Lord, as the Lord teacheth us from the true and holy balance. Therefore, we cannot *kill*, or *commit adultery*, or *ſteal*, or *bear falſe witneſs*, or *covet any thing that is our neighbour's*.

Then, for the laws and ordinances of the new teſtament; the miniſtration of the goſpel is a miniſtration of Spirit and power; even of the light of the everlaſting day, which the true miniſtry was ſent to turn mens minds from the darkneſs to.

And here we ſee what was taught and required before the apoſtaſy, while the church was in its firſt glory; and what was permitted and practiſed by permiſſion; which were ſuch kind of things, as were not of the nature of the kingdom, not of the nature of the light of the goſpel-day; but of a lower nature, of an outward nature, of an earthly (elementary) nature, which

which were to be ſhaken in due time, that that which could not be ſhaken (which they ſignified of, and repreſented) might remain, and be eſtabliſhed in the ſpiritual and heavenly Jeruſalem (which is the Jeruſalem of the goſpel) without any ſuch thing as could be ſhaken; as is teſtified, *Heb.* xii. 22, to the end: and we underſtand alſo from God's Spirit, and from the ſcriptures of truth, that all ſuch kind of things were part of, or belonging to, the outward court; which was ſhaken, and given to the Gentiles, when God's Spirit meaſured what he would have abide with his true, inward, ſpiritual Jews; and what he would leave to the profeſſing world; who in mind, nature, and ſpirit, and in God's account alſo, are but Gentiles.

Queſt. *How did God teach you to pray? Surely ye never learned the Lord's prayer; for ye do not practiſe that among you.*

Anſw. As God brought us into a ſenſible condition, ſo we came to feel our wants, and the need of our ſouls, inwardly and ſpiritually.

Now, waiting on the Lord in this ſenſe, when we meet together, and when we are alone alſo, the Lord breatheth upon us, and kindleth in us fervent deſires and longings of ſoul after that which is pure, and to be delivered from that which is impure; and that we might be ingraffed more and more into Chriſt; and that judgment and condemnation might paſs upon all that is not of God in us, and that our hearts might be ſo united to the Lord, as that we might fear his name fully. For we feel and obſerve, that all our life and ſtrength flows from the union of our ſouls with the Lord; and therefore, above all things, we cry for that, and for ſeparation from that ſpirit which captivateth into the things of the earth, and in the earthly mind and nature.

So we watch unto prayer, and watch for help from God in our calling upon him; and are deeply ſenſible that we have need both of watching and praying continually, the enemy is ſo near, and the ſoul's ſnares and dangers ſo many.

And truly, Chriſt, our Lord and maſter, who taught his diſciples to pray formerly, hath taught us alſo to pray that very prayer; though not to ſay the words outwardly in the will of men, or in our own will; he hath taught our hearts to breathe after the ſame things, even that the name of our heavenly Father might be hallowed or ſanctified more and more, among all that call upon his name in truth, and eſpecially in our own hearts; and that his kingdom might come more and more, that he might reign more in mens ſpirits, and the kingdom of ſin and Satan be thrown down; and that his will might *be done*, even in our *earth*, *as it is done in heavenly* places, where all the hoſts of God obey him; and that we might have every day a proportion of the *heavenly bread*, whereby our ſouls may live to him; and convenient food and proviſion outward alſo, according as he ſeeth good, who careth for us.

Now,

Now, as we are kept in the light, and watch to the light which diſcovers things, we ſee what we are kept out of, and what we at any time are entangled in, and ſo *treſpaſs* againſt the Lord; and then we are taught to beg pardon, and to wait where pardon is to be received, through our advocate, even as God hath taught us to *forgive*.

Yet this doth not imbolden any of the little ones to ſin; but they pray *that they may not be led* (or fall) *into temptation*; but may witneſs deliverance from the *evil*, which the enemy watcheth to betray and inſnare them with. And theſe cries are put up to him, who is ready to hear, and who can anſwer and fulfill the deſires of them that love and fear him; and indeed not only ſo, but they are alſo put up in faith, that in the way of God the ſoul ſhall obtain and receive what it prayeth and waiteth for.

Now we witneſs this to be *true religion, and undefiled before God*; and we are ſenſible that the Lord hath taught us this, and is with us in our faith, which he hath given us; in our obedience, in our praying to him in the name of his Son, in our watching, in our waiting, in the ſilence of our ſpirits, before his mighty and glorious majeſty.

Oh! that ye all knew our God, and his Chriſt, in the ſame covenant and power of life, wherein it hath pleaſed him to make himſelf manifeſt to us! Oh! awake! awake! out of your dreams, come out of the night of ſin, and darkneſs, into the light of the day!

Be not offended that I call them *dreams of the night*, for they are no better, before the light of the day. Oh! be not contented with dreams concerning God; with dreams concerning fellowſhip with him and the ſaints in light; with dreams concerning remiſſion, concerning juſtification, concerning peace, concerning ſanctification, concerning the help of God's Spirit in prayer, *&c.*!

Ah! friends, dear friends (for ye, in whom there are any true breatheings after the Lord, are ſo to me); oh! let go the dead for the living; away with dead knowledge, dead faith, dead hope, dead prayers, dead underſtanding of the ſcriptures, dead ſtrivings after holineſs, which ye ſhall never obtain, but be ſtill bowed down under corruption, when at any time truly ſenſible, notwithſtanding all theſe (truly groaning and complaining is your beſt ſtate here, for your peace here is wrong); and come to feel that raiſed in you, in the true retired waiting upon the Lord, which ſhall certainly obtain in you, as your minds are united to it, and come into the true ſenſe and ſubjection under it; and then ye ſhall obtain in it, and with it, what the hearts of all the upright (whether in captivity, or out of captivity) breathe after!

Oh! therefore, be not any longer prejudiced by the ſubtil devices and deceits of the enemy, againſt that in your hearts, which reproves becauſe of ſin; and likewiſe draws and leads into that which is holy; for it is no leſs than the pure, heavenly light of God's own Spirit, whatever ye,

through

through miſtake, miſunderſtanding, or want of true experience, may judge of it.

XIX.

Concerning the Goſpel State.

THE goſpel is a miniſtration of the new covenant, or a ſpiritual miniſtration of the ſubſtance of all that was ſhadowed out under the law. There were many things under the law; but in the goſpel, God hath gathered all into one; in Chriſt there is but one ſeed, one Spirit, one life, one power, which redeems, one circumciſion, one baptiſm, one faith, *&c.*

The law was given by Moſes, and the miniſtration thereof continued through the prophets, until the ſeed ſhould come, which was to put an end to the law, and the righteouſneſs thereof (as in the letter) and bring in the righteouſneſs in the ſpirit, which ſhould laſt for ever.

The goſpel is by Chriſt, by whom God ſpake in the laſt days, who is the beloved Son, the prophet and high-prieſt of God, who is to be heard for ever; who taught his diſciples, while he was with them on earth, in that body of fleſh which his Father prepared for him; and afterwards by his Spirit (or holy anointing) whereby he continueth teaching his children, and bringing them up in the virtue, life, and power of the new covenant; giving them a new heart and ſpirit, and cauſing the old nature of the earthly Adam to die in them, and paſs away from them.

The law was given to the Jew outward, and is againſt nature in man, which ſeems forward to obey, but will not.

The law alſo is given to check that part (or nature in man) which is above the ſeed, to which were all the ſhadows and types outward.

But in the goſpel, which is the power of God to the redemption of the ſoul, that part is done away, and the ſeed raiſed, and comes to live in the ſoul, and the ſoul in the power which quickens it, in and through the ſeed.

And ſo, here the life, and virtue, and nature of the ſeed overſhadows all, and changes all in the goſpel-miniſtration; ſo that here is a new heaven, and a new earth, wherein God reigns, and where righteouſneſs dwells; and the old things, wherein unrighteouſneſs dwelt, and wherein the devil reigned, are done away, and ſo his kingdom is deſtroyed, and laid waſte in man, and the kingdom of Chriſt ſet up, exalted, and eſtabliſhed.

Then comes the mountain of the Lord's houſe to be known on the top, and above all the mountains and hills; and then is the flowing of the enlightened ſoul thither, to learn of the Lord in his holy ſanctuary, that it may know his ways, and walk in his paths. Then is the voice of the true ſhepherd heard, and the law known (the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus) which cometh out of Sion, *and the Word of the Lord* (even the Holy One

One of Iſrael) *which cometh from Jeruſalem.* Then is the day of the Lord known; the mighty, terrible, ſhaking day of the Lord, which is then upon all fleſh, ſilencing it in the dread and awe of him, who is holy and pure; and the ſeed is then raiſed to life, and in life and power, and the Lord alone exalted in that ſoul. *For the Son exalted the Father only, in the days of his fleſh*; and it is ſo now, where-ever the ſame ſeed and power of life is made manifeſt, and rules.

Then after this ſhaking, after the work of this terrible day of the Lord in the heart, when God hath purged away the filth and blood of the defiled ſoul and ſpirit, by his Spirit of judgment and burning, then that which is left ſhall be called holy, and dedicated to the Lord, even in every one that is written and reckoned by God among the living in his Jeruſalem. And all God's tabernacles and dwelling-places on his holy mountain, and in his holy city, will he cover with the glory of his preſence; and all their aſſemblies (by his cloudy pillar, and by his ſhining flame) will God be a defence about; before which brightneſs (and the ariſing of his life and power in the midſt of his people) Satan with his devices and fiery darts ſhall fall like flaſhes of lightning, and his ſtorms and winds ſhall not be able to prevail againſt the houſes or dwelling-places which God builds on this his holy mountain of peace and ſalvation.

Then the rod of the ſtem of Jeſſe is known, and the branch which groweth out of his root, and the Spirit of the Lord reſting upon him. *For grace and truth came by Jeſus Chriſt*; and where the grace and truth *which comes by Jeſus Chriſt* is received, and his everlaſting covenant entered into, there the ſame Spirit is poured forth, and reſts (even upon all the ſons), and true judgment is ſet up in the heart, and the ſoul eſtabliſhed in the righteouſneſs and peace of his kingdom.

So if any want wiſdom, let him aſk in faith; it is preſently given from the Spirit of wiſdom, which is poured out upon the ſeed; which is a Spirit of underſtanding and knowledge, and of pure heavenly fear, *&c.* which maketh quick in underſtanding the fear of the Lord; which fear (being underſtood and obſerved) keepeth the heart clean, teaching it to avoid and keep out of all that defiles; ſo that here is not ſo much as a touching the unclean thing by any of the ſons and daughters, who are led by God's Spirit, and live and walk in the Spirit; but a following of the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus fully and perfectly.

Let ſin and imperfection received back to Sodom, Egypt, and Babylon, from whence it came; but let holineſs and unſtained beauty dwell in Sion; yea, let Urim and Thummim, even God's light and perfection, be with his redeemed people for ever and ever.

Here the wolf dwells with the lamb, and the leopard lies with the kid, and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together, and the little child leads them. Here the lion devours not, but eats ſtraw like the ox; and the ſucking child, and the weaned child, can play in the hole of the aſp, and

put his hand on the cockatrice's den; and they that are in the power can tread upon ſerpents, and they cannot hurt, wound, poiſon, or deſtroy; for there is ſafety all over God's holy mountain, and the venom or poiſon of the wicked ſpirit cannot reach thither, to hurt or poiſon any there: for God's earth is filled with knowledge, with life, with pure living knowledge, which preſerves out of the reach of darkneſs and death.

Nay, here Ephraim doth not envy Judah, nor Judah vex Ephraim; for the envying, vexing nature and ſpirit is taken out of them both. And here is turned to the Lord a people of a pure language, who ſpeak the truth as they feel it, as they receive it from the Lord, in the life of it, in the true ſenſe and underſtanding of it, and not according to their own apprehendings or imaginings concerning it, which are the various and many languages of Babel. For in the ſeed, and of the ſeed, is the pure language; but out from the ſeed are the many voices and languages (even the confuſion of Babel); one ſpeaking as he apprehends, thus; another ſpeaking as he conceives, thus; ſo plainly manifeſting that they are out from the evidence and demonſtration of the Spirit, whoſe voice is one, and language one, in all, in the day of the goſpel. And he that ſpeaks otherwiſe than the law and teſtimony of life ſpeaks in the heart, it is either becauſe he knoweth not, or is not yet gathered into, the morning-light of the everlaſting day of the goſpel; for there all are to ſpeak, as the oracles of God, the truth as it is in Jeſus.

In this day the anger of God is turned away, and condemnation come to an end (for *there is no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus, who walk not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit)*; and the Comforter is come, by whom God comforts the ſoul; and the ſoul with joy draweth water out of the wells or ſprings of the Comforter. Yea, the ſoul is gathered into the love (or into God, who is love), where the Saviour and ſalvation is felt, and God found ſuch a preſent help and ſtrength in time of trouble, that fear is done away, and the Lord truſted and hoped in; yea, and boaſted of, in every condition. So that his name is made mention of, and ſung of, and exalted over all that can come to oppoſe or break down the work of his power in the heart; inſomuch that the inhabitant of Sion cries out and ſhouts againſt the enemy, when he appears, becauſe the Holy One of Iſrael is ſo great in the midſt of her, who breaks the ſpear and the bow, the ſhield and the battle, Selah. See *Iſai.* xii.

Yea, in this day the feaſt of fat things is made on God's holy mountain; of fat things full of marrow, and wines on the lees well refined. And in this mountain the veil of the covering (ſpread over the heart) is done away: for in the ſeed there is no feigned covering; but an opening of the unveiled eye, to ſee the unveiled life and power, even the revealed arm of the Redeemer.

Who hath believed our report; *and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* It was ſaid ſo in the old covenant, in the law diſpenſation; but it is not ſaid

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ſo in the new covenant, in the goſpel diſpenſation; for the veil is done away in Chriſt, and the children there with open face behold (as in a mirror) the glory of the Lord.

And here, where the ſeed is revealed, and the ſoul come into the ſeed, and become one with the ſeed, that is felt which breaketh the ſerpent's head; and when his head is broken, death is ſoon ſwallowed up in victory, and the tears of ſorrow wiped away (ſo that there is no room for any tears now, but tears of joy, tears of melting love and ſweetneſs, before the Lord), and the rebuke becauſe of uncircumciſion taken away. For when God circumciſeth the heart, *to love the Lord with all the heart*, then it receiveth life from him, and then the ſhame and rebuke of the uncircumciſed and dead ſtate paſſeth away.

And then ſaith the ſoul, *Lo! this is my God I ſo much wanted, and ſo long waited for. Oh! he is come, he is come, to judge my heart in righteouſneſs, and to bring under all that hath kept the ſeed under in me; and I feel him, my ſoul's ſalvation, and my heart is glad in him. And now I know the land of Judah* (for that land outwardly was but a figure of the inward), *and the ſtrong city that is therein* (which the righteous nation that keepeth the truth enters in at the gates of) *where God appointeth ſalvation for walls and bulwarks.* See Iſai. xxv. and *chap.* xxvi.

And in this day, when the ſeed is raiſed, when the goſpel power reacheth to the ſeed, and raiſeth up the ſoul with the ſeed, and puniſheth Leviathan, that crooked ſerpent, and deſtroyeth the place where the dragons lay; ſo that as ſuch a place it can be found no more, becauſe the Lord hath made all things new, and laid waſte the old, then ſhall be ſung to her that was afflicted a vineyard of red wine, which the Lord will keep and water every moment, leſt any hurt it; yea, the Lord (who is the keeper of Iſrael, who neither ſlumbereth nor ſleepeth) will keep it night and day; and though fury be not in the Lord, yet he will go through the briars and thorns which ſet themſelves in battle againſt him, to hinder the current of his love and bleſſings upon his heritage.

But as for his people, God will be very gracious to them, anſwering them in all that they call upon him for, and being with them in the fire, and in the water; ſo that the waters ſhall not be able to overwhelm them, nor the flame of the fierceſt fire kindle upon them. For the enemies' fire ſhall not be able to burn up God's heritage, nor their waters to overflow them; but God's fire and waters ſhall overflow and conſume the adverſaries, as he pleaſeth to let forth his overflowing ſcourge and fiery indignation upon them.

The goſpel is a ſtate of pouring out the Spirit of God upon his ſeed, and his bleſſing upon his off-ſpring; wherein he ſtrengthens that which is weak, and confirms that which is feeble; wherein he comforts worm Jacob, and recompenſeth vengeance to that which oppreſſed him, that which wounded him, that which bowed him down, that which cloſed his eye,

ſtopped his ear, made him dumb and lame, hardened his heart from God's fear, *&c.* that nature, that wiſdom, that ſpirit, that power, is viſited with vengeance. That which emptied him of the good, and made him deſolate and ſolitary, is now ſmitten, diſtreſſed, and made ſolitary; and the priſoner of hope looſed, and brought out of the pit; and the blind eye opened, and the deaf ear unſtopped, and the lame made to leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb to ſing, and the parched ground become a pool, and the thirſty land ſprings of water; and that nature wherein dragons dwelt is now changed, and life dwells there; and the holy new earth brings forth her increaſe of life to the Lord, and the way of holineſs is made plain; which rough Eſau, or conceited Iſhmael, or ſacrificing Cain, (who hath not the true brotherly love in him) cannot come into; but holy Abel, bleſſed Iſaac, plain Jacob, walked therein, and inherited the bleſſing; and the ranſomed of the Lord return from all their deſolations, captivities, and ſcatterings in the apoſtaſy, and come to Sion with ſongs, and everlaſting joy upon their heads, where they obtain joy and gladneſs, and where ſorrow and ſighing flee away. For when the Comforter is come to the ſoul, when the Spirit from on high is poured out upon it, then the wilderneſs becomes a fruitful field, and the fruitful field is counted for a foreſt; then judgment dwells in the wilderneſs, and righteouſneſs remains in the fruitful field; then righteouſneſs is known, and the work thereof; and the work of righteouſneſs is peace, and the effect of righteouſneſs quietneſs, and aſſurance for ever. And the people of God then dwell (even his holy Iſrael, his ſpiritual Iſrael, the redeemed ones by his Spirit and power) in a peaceable habitation, and in ſure dwellings, and in quiet reſting-places, where their God is to them as a munition of rocks, and as broad rivers of love, life, righteouſneſs, peace, joy, and bleſſedneſs for ever.

In the goſpel ſtate, the Lord, the Redeemer, the Holy One of Iſrael, who is the teacher of his people in the new covenant, who teacheth them to profit therein, and leadeth them in the way that they ſhould go: I ſay, in the goſpel ſtate he is known, and his voice hearkened to. *My ſheep* (thoſe whom I gather and redeem) *hear my voice, and follow me*, ſaith Chriſt; who feed my flock like a ſhepherd, guiding them by my Spirit into freſh and green paſtures, gathering my lambs with my arm, carrying them in my boſom, and gently leading thoſe that are with young. Yea, I bring the blind by a way that they knew not, and lead them in paths they have not known. I make dark things light before them, and crooked things ſtrait. Theſe things do I do unto them, and will not forſake them. Yea, worm Jacob, which was trampled upon by all, is now made a ſharp threſhing inſtrument having teeth, which threſheth the mountains (beating them ſmall) and makes the hills as chaff, which fans them, and the wind carrieth them away, and the whirlwind ſcattereth them; but Jacob rejoiceth in his God, and glorieth in the Holy One of Iſrael; who openeth rivers in high-places, and fountains in the midſt of vallies; and makes the wilderneſs a

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pool of water, and the dry land ſprings of water. For the Lord hath comforted Sion, and had compaſſion on her waſte place, and on her oppreſſed ſeed in Babylon; and hath ſaid to the priſoners, *Go forth*; *and to them that ſat in darkneſs, ſhew yourſelves abroad in the light*; and he hath made her wilderneſs like Eden, and her deſart like the garden of the Lord; ſo that joy and gladneſs is found in her (even the joy of God's Spirit, which is unſpeakable, and full of glory), with thankſgiving, and the voice of melody: for the deſtroyer, and thoſe that made her waſte, are gone forth of her, and great is the the Holy One in the midſt of her. So that the barren, that did not bear, ſings; and ſhe cries aloud, and breaks forth into ſinging, that did not travail with child; for ſhe travails not now in vain, but alſo brings forth abundantly: ſo that more are the children of the deſolate than of the formerly married wife. And how can it be otherwiſe? For the Maker is the huſband, who hath made an everlaſting covenant of peace with the ſoul in the Son of his love, and keeps and preſerves in that covenant, where the Lord can never be wroth the ſoul, nor rebuke it: for here all the children of the Lord are taught of the Lord, and kept in his holy fear, and in ſubjection to his Spirit; and great is their peace, and in righteouſneſs are they eſtabliſhed, and are far from oppreſſion, the terror whereof cannot come near them.

There are three or four things yet more on my heart to mention concerning the goſpel ſtate.

Firſt, In it the goſpel faſt is known; which is not to afflict the ſoul, or hang down the head like a bulruſh for a day; but to looſe the bands of wickedneſs, to undo the heavy burdens, to let the oppreſſed go free, to break every yoke, to deal one's bread to the hungry *(to viſit the fatherleſs and widows in their affliction*, and to keep one's ſelf unſpotted from the worldly ſpirit and nature, which defiles, and ſo not to touch the unclean thing).

Then the light of the ſoul breaks forth as the morning, and its health ſprings forth ſpeedily, and its righteouſneſs goeth before it (for that which judgeth unrighteouſneſs, that is its righteouſneſs; which inſtead of coming after, to reprove and condemn, now goeth before), and the glory of the Lord is the reward, coming after to preſerve and defend all that ſprings up in the power. Oh! bleſſed is he that witneſſeth this ſtate!

Secondly, In the goſpel ſtate the goſpel ſabbath is kept, and known to be God's holy day, and called a *delight* (the holy of the Lord, honourable), and the Lord is honoured in it by the ſoul while it walketh not in its own ways, nor findeth its own pleaſures, nor ſpeaketh its own words: and then the ſoul delighteth itſelf in the Lord, who then (in this ſtate) cauſeth it to ride on the high-places of the earth, and feedeth it with the heritage of Jacob its father. What is that? What is Jacob's heritage? What is it that Jacob is to be fed with, and inherit? Is it any leſs than the life and bleſſedneſs of the promiſed land? Is it any leſs than the hidden manna? Is it

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any leſs than the fruit of the living vine? Is it any other than the ſweetneſs and fatneſs of the true olive-tree?

Thirdly, In it the garment of ſalvation is put on, even the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; for here the filthy garments are put off, and the pure garments put on. For here the Lord hath appointed to them that *have mourned in Sion, to give them beauty for aſhes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praiſe for the ſpirit of heavineſs*, that they might be called trees of righteouſneſs, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified. So that here the ſoul can truly ſay, *I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my ſoul ſhall be joyful in my God; for he hath cloathed me with the garments of ſalvation; he hath covered me with the robe of righteouſneſs.* For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden cauſeth the things that are ſown in it to ſpring forth, ſo the Lord hath cauſed righteouſneſs and praiſe to ſpring forth before the eyes of all that are truly opened by him; and he will not draw back his arm, or put up the ſword which he hath drawn, till he hath deſtroyed his adverſaries, and laid waſte the mount of Eſau, and made his Jeruſalem the praiſe of the whole earth. *Amen, hallelujah!*

And here is the love which caſteth out fear, and removeth care; ſo that they that dwell here are careful in nothing, but in every thing make their requeſts known to God by prayer and ſupplication, with thankſgiving; *and the peace of God, which paſſeth all underſtanding*, guards the heart and mind, through Chriſt Jeſus. So that here God glorifieth the ſoul, changing it from glory to glory, in and by his Spirit; and God is praiſed and glorified in and by the ſoul, and the heart kept pure and chaſte in the eye of the Lord; and the converſation ordered aright by his Spirit and power, in which the ſoul lives and walks, and his ſalvation ſeen and enjoyed daily more and more. So that here is a poſſeſſion or inheritance of life in the kingdom (in the holy land of the living) of which there is no end. Everlaſting endleſs prayers to the Holy One of Iſrael (whoſe tabernacle is with men, and who dwelleth in the midſt of his people) for ever and ever.

Now if any one doubt concerning the truth of theſe things, this word is in my heart to ſuch, *Come, and ſee.* Oh! come and ſee the glory of the Lord, and the power of his life, and righteouſneſs of his kingdom, which is now revealed, after the long night of darkneſs! Oh! bleſſed, bleſſed be his name, who hath cauſed his light to ſhine, and opened the eye (which was once blind) to ſee it!

Queſt. *But how may I come to ſee the glory of the goſpel ſtate?*

Anſw. Come to the ſeed, and wait to feel and receive the power which raiſeth the ſeed in the heart, and bringeth the heart, ſoul, mind, and ſpirit into union with the ſeed.

Queſt. *But how may I come to the ſeed; and how may I wait aright to feel and receive the power which raiſeth it?*

Anſw. Mind that in thee which ſearcheth the heart, and what it reacheth to, and quickeneth in thee; what it draweth thee from, what it draweth thee

thee to; how it ſheweth thee thine own inability to follow, and how it giveth ability when thou art weary of toiling and labouring of thyſelf. Oh! this is he whom we have waited for! Thus he appeared to us; thus he taught us to turn in, and to turn from the kingdom of darkneſs within, towards the kingdom of light, which the good ſeedſman had ſown in us as a grain of muſtard-ſeed; which when we found, we knew it to be the pearl of price, and were made willing to *ſell all for it*; and now it is purchaſed, and alſo poſſeſſed in a good meaſure; bleſſed be the name of our merciful God, and tender father, for ever and ever.

O hungering and thirſting ſoul after life (after truth, after the Lamb's righteouſneſs), do thou alſo wait to be taught of the Lord (who thus taught us), and then do thou go and do ſo likewiſe, and thou wilt never repent of this purchaſe, or of what thou parteſt with for it, when once thou comeſt to enjoy and poſſeſs any proportion of it.

The Lord make thee ſenſible of the viſits, drawings, and leadings of his Holy Spirit, and guide thy feet thereby into the way of truth and peace. *Amen.*

XX.

Concerning Baptiſm.

He that believeth, and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved; but he that believeth not, ſhall be damned, MARK xvi. 16.

THIS is a very weighty ſcripture, and neceſſary for every Chriſtian rightly to underſtand, that he may ſo believe, and be ſo baptized, as to witneſs ſalvation by the goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

Now what believing is this which is here required as neceſſary to ſalvation, and which the promiſe of ſalvation is to? Is it any leſs than a *believing in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, from a ſenſe of the power which the Father hath given him to ſave with? Is it not an inward believing, a believing with the heart? And what baptiſm or waſhing is it which ſaves? Is it not an inward waſhing, a waſhing of the ſoul, a waſhing of the heart, a waſhing of the conſcience, from dead works, to ſerve the living God? Doth outward waſhing ſave the ſoul? Inward waſhing doth; baptizing into the name doth. Bodily exerciſe profiteth little; but godlineſs (the inwardly renewing and waſhing of the mind) profiteth greatly.

There is one faith, one baptiſm. Is not the true faith inward and ſpiritual? Is not the one baptiſm ſo alſo? Sure I am, that he that thus believeth, and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved; but he that believeth not, remaineth in the filthy, unwaſhed ſtate, in which there neither is, nor can be, ſalvation; but judgment and condemnation, death and deſtruction, for ever.

The apoſtle Peter ſhews, *Pet.* iii. what the baptiſm is which ſaveth, even that which is the antitype, or which inwardly or ſpiritually anſwers to Noah's ark.

ark. The Greek word is Ἀντίτυπον, which ſignifieth the *antitype*, or that which anſwers to the type; the ſubſtance, which comes inſtead of the figure or ſhadow; and ſo it is more properly and naturally rendered in the old tranſlation thus: *The baptiſm that now is, anſwering that figure, ſaveth.* For as Noah's ark ſaved the bodies of thoſe that were in it when God came to judge and deſtroy the old world; ſo the inward waſhing ſaveth thoſe that are waſhed thereby from the wrath and deſtruction which will come upon all that are unwaſhed.

Now leſt any ſhould miſunderſtand and miſapply his words, as if he ſpake concerning outward baptiſm, or waſhing, he explaineth himſelf in the following words: *Not* (ſaith he) *the putting away of the filth of the fleſh, not the outward waſhing of the body*, that is not it that ſaves; but that baptiſm which cauſeth the anſwer of a good conſcience towards God, by the reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt. For this is the effect of the inward baptiſm; ſin being waſhed away by the water of life, by the blood of the Lamb, that which is new, that which is renewed, riſeth up out of the water which waſheth away ſin; and then the pure and good conſcience anſwers to God, and the ſoul knows and partakes of both the death and reſurrection of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and ſo being baptized by the one baptiſm, even the baptiſm of Chriſt, into the one body, comes into the ſtate and fellowſhip of the living. Another apoſtle alſo ſpeaketh of the inward waſhing, even the waſhing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghoſt; by which, ſaith he, *God according to his mercy ſaved us*, Titus iii. 5.

The apoſtle Paul ſpeaks of a *circumciſion made without hands*, and tells wherein it conſiſts; to wit, in putting off the body of the ſins of the fleſh: and ſheweth how this is effected; namely, not by Moſes's circumciſion, but by the circumciſion of Chriſt, *Col.* ii. 21. And truly they who are thus circumciſed are the true circumciſion, the ſpiritual circumciſion, who worſhip God in the Spirit, and have no confidence in the fleſh, but rejoice in Chriſt Jeſus, who thus circumciſeth them. Now in the next verſe he ſpeaketh of baptiſm, *of being buried with Chriſt in baptiſm, and of riſing with him in the ſame, through the faith of the operation of God, who raiſed him from the dead.* What is this baptiſm? Is it inferior to the circumciſion before ſpoken of? Is it not without hands alſo? What is it that buries into the death of Chriſt; that raiſeth into the life of Chriſt through the faith of the operation of God? Is not this the one ſpiritual and heavenly baptiſm, wherewith the one body is baptized by the one Spirit? What doth outward circumciſion avail? Doth it avail any thing? What doth outward waſhing avail? Doth it avail any more than outward circumciſion? But the inward circumciſion of the Jew inward, and the inward waſhing of the ſoul from ſin, doth avail very much.

Now for that place, *Matt.* xxviii. 19. where Chriſt expreſly commandeth baptizing, it is a queſtion very weighty, and worthy duly to be conſidered, what baptiſm he there commandeth. For if it be outward baptiſm, they

they greatly err who apprehend it to be the inward and ſpiritual baptiſm; but if it be the inward and ſpiritual baptiſm which Chriſt intended in thoſe words, then they greatly err who apprehend it to be the outward. Now conſider the words in the fear and weight of God's Spirit.

It is ſaid, *Go teach, baptizing*; but it is not ſaid, *baptizing with water, but in the name*, or rather (as the Greek is) *into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt.*

Now to baptize with water is one thing, and to baptize into the name is another; as they who experience the ſpiritual baptiſm know it to be. For the word of faith turns men from Satan to the power of life; and then as they receive the power, and are made partakers of the power, they are baptized into the power and virtue of life; and ſo they are buried (ſo far as they come into Chriſt) by the power of his Spirit, with this heavenly baptiſm, into death unto ſin, and by the ſame power are made alive unto righteouſneſs; and ſo the name of the Lord, the name of the Father, Son and Spirit, comes over them, and they riſe up in it unto life and righteouſneſs, and ſo are dead unto ſin, and alive unto God. Now any outward circumciſing or waſhing can be but a figure of this; but the inward circumciſing and waſhing is the thing itſelf. For Chriſt ſent not his able miniſters of the New Teſtament to miniſter the letter, or to miniſter the figures of things; but to miniſter the Spirit, (elſe how were they able miniſters of the Spirit?) to miniſter the ſubſtance; not to miniſter a circumciſion or baptiſm which might be ſhaken and paſs away, as outward and elementary, but to miniſter the circumciſion and baptiſm which cannot be ſhaken; which is the circumciſion and baptiſm of the goſpel, the circumciſion and baptiſm of the Spirit, the circumciſion and baptiſm of the kingdom, which is never to be ſhaken and paſs away as elementary, but to ſtand and abide for ever. Read *Heb.* xii. 26, 27, 28. and conſider how all elementary and outward things which could be ſhaken, were to be ſhaken and paſs away; that thoſe things which were of an higher nature (even of the nature of the kingdom), might remain and be eſtabliſhed in their ſtead.

And indeed as the inward circumciſion could not be throughly and alone eſtabliſhed while the figure thereof remained, the ſame may be truly ſaid concerning the inward baptiſm; ſo that by this it may appear, that the baptiſm of water cannot be the baptiſm which Chriſt intended in this place, becauſe the baptiſm here ſpoken of was to continue to the end of the world; but the baptiſm of water is plainly of ſuch an outward elementary nature, as might be ſhaken as well as circumciſion, and ſo was to be ſhaken in due time, that that which could not be ſhaken might remain. Read alſo *Rev.* xi. 12. where it is plainly ſignified, under that phraſe of the outward court being left out of God's meaſure, and given to the Gentiles, that things of ſuch a nature were ſhaken; and ſo were thoſe that were not the true and ſpiritual worſhippers in God's ſight. For they are Jews under the goſpel who are Jews inwardly; and they who are

not Jews inwardly, are by God's Spirit numbered amongſt the Gentiles. And conſider how not only the notorious Heathen, but ſuch as had got the *form of godlineſs, but denied the power thereof*, were rejected, with their outſide ſhadows, as really as outward Jeruſalem was rejected to be trodden under foot of the Gentiles.

Object. 1. *But againſt this it is objected, that the baptiſm of the Spirit cannot be the baptiſm ſpoken of in this place, becauſe the baptiſm ſpoken of in this place is commanded; but the baptiſm of the Spirit was never commanded, nor was it any man's ſin not to be ſo baptized.*

Anſw. Surely this is a great miſtake. Was the inward waſhing of the heart never commanded? *Rent your hearts, and not your garments.* What is this but the ſpiritual baptiſm? The goſpel is a miniſtration of inward things, and the inward things are ſtrictly commanded there. Can any man be ſaved without inward baptizing? and is he not commanded to receive inward baptizing? and doth he not ſin, if he do not wait to receive it, and give up his heart and ſoul to be baptized by God's Holy Spirit? If the eye were opened in people to look into the goſpel-miniſtration, and into the inward nature of things, this might eaſily be demonſtrated to the leaſt babe there. For as the goſpel was before the law, and could not be diſannulled by the law; ſo this miniſtration of the Spirit's baptiſm (for nature and kind) was long before John's baptiſm, and could not be diſannulled by any outward miniſtration of baptiſm, but abideth the ſame for ever; and is to have its place in the goſpel-ſtate, where the figures and ſhadows of things paſs away, and that which is true, laſting and ſubſtantial, filleth up the room thereof.

Now the baptiſm of the Spirit, or the ſpiritual waſhing and circumciſing the heart (which is all one in ſubſtance), was called for and required of the Jews under the law; and it was their ſin not to anſwer God's call and requiring therein. Conſider theſe ſcriptures following, with many more of the like nature; *Break up your fallow-ground, and ſow not among thorns*, Jer. iv. 3. Can the fallow-ground be broken up, and the thorns rooted out (elſe the ſowing will be amongſt them), without the circumciſion or baptiſm of the Spirit, which is all one in nature and ground? Again: *Circumciſe the fore-ſkin of your hearts, and be no more ſtiff-necked*, Deut. x. 16. *Make you a new heart and a new ſpirit; for why will ye die, O houſe of Iſrael!* Ezek. xviii. 31. (Is not this all one in ſubſtance with that ſcripture, *He that believeth and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved?*) *O Jeruſalem, waſh thine heart from wickedneſs, that thou mayeſt be ſaved! how long ſhall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee!* Jer. iv. 14. *Waſh ye, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; ceaſe to do evil, learn to do well; ſeek judgment, relieve the oppreſſed, judge the fatherleſs, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reaſon together, ſaith the Lord: though your ſins be as ſcarlet, they ſhall be as white as ſnow; though they be red like crimſon, they ſhall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye ſhall eat the good of the land; but if ye*

refuſe

refuſe and rebel, ye ſhall be devoured with the ſword: for the mouth of the Lord hath ſpoken it, Iſai. i. 16. to 21.

Is not here the true baptiſm, and the remiſſion of ſins, which enſueth thereupon, with the bleſſing on the baptized eſtate, and the curſe on the unbaptized, which extendeth both to Jew and Gentile? for with God *there is no reſpect of perſons.*

Oh! that men could read the ſcriptures of truth, with the true ſpirit and with the true underſtanding! For theſe things which were written to the people of the Jews, were written for our learning; and precious things may be learned from the ſcriptures, by thoſe whoſe eyes are opened by the Lord, and who keep cloſe in their reading to that which anointeth and openeth the eye; whereas others cannot but miſunderſtand and wreſt them, to their own great danger at leaſt, if not to the ruin and deſtruction of their ſouls.

I ſhall here mention but one place more, which is that of *Pſal.* li. 17. *The ſacrifices of God are a broken ſpirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not deſpiſe.* Can any offer up the ſacrifice to God, but he who is inwardly and ſpiritually waſhed from that which defileth and hardeneth? And doth not God require this baptiſm? And what is this but the baptiſm of the Spirit? who thus waſheth the ſoul with his heavenly water, in the miniſtration of his word and power, when the virtue and efficacy thereof reacheth to the heart, in and through the faith.

Object. 2. *The baptiſm of the Spirit cannot be here intended, becauſe this baptiſm is to be adminiſtered by men; but the baptiſm of the Spirit was never adminiſtered by men; Jeſus Chriſt was the alone miniſter of this baptiſm.*

Anſw. The apoſtle ſaith, *that God had made them able miniſters of the New Teſtament; not of the letter, but of the Spirit: for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life,* 2 Cor. iii. 6.

Mark; They were made able miniſters by God, of that which giveth life: and that they did miniſter the Spirit by impoſition of hands, is manifeſt, *Acts* xix. 6. and in many other ſcriptures.

Indeed the apoſtles were not able of themſelves, or by any virtue or ſtrength of their own, to beget men to God, or to baptize men into his name and power; but their ſufficiency was of God.

Again, Paul was ſent to the Gentiles, to open their eyes, *Acts* xxvi. 18. Now, opening the eyes of the blind is as peculiar to Chriſt, as baptizing with the Spirit can be.

When Chriſt gave his apoſtles commiſſion to teach, baptizing, he told them, *All power in heaven and earth was given him*; and bid them not *depart from Jeruſalem, but wait for the promiſe of the Father: for John truly baptized with water, but ye ſhall be baptized with the Holy Ghoſt not many days hence*; and that then they ſhould receive power. What to do? To baptize with water? or to baptize into the name with the ſame baptiſm wherewith they themſelves were baptized? See *Matt.* xxviii. and *Acts* i.

Now if this commiſſion (here given to the apoſtles, *Matt.* xxviii. 16, &c.) was to baptize with water, then Paul was inferior to the other apoſtles: for he, though he had ſeen the Lord, and was ſent from him to open the eyes of the Gentiles; yet he was not ſent to baptize with water, as he expreſsly ſaith: *he was not ſent to baptize* (that is, outwardly with water) *but to preach the goſpel.* But if the baptiſm intended by Chriſt was inward and ſpiritual, even into the name, virtue, life, and power of the Spirit, then Paul had the apoſtolick commiſſion as fully as any of the reſt, and the grace and power of God did work as mightily in him to this end as in any of them.

But men are as much miſtaken about the teaching required by this commiſſion as about this baptiſm: for this teaching is not a literal teaching of things, or a diſcipline into an outward knowledge and way, but a teaching in the Spirit and power; and him whom God enableth ſo to do, he alſo enableth to baptize into the ſame Spirit and power. Yea, indeed, when the life and power miniſters (the word ſpoken being mixed with faith in them that hear), it brings the earthly part under, and brings the life and power of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt over the heart and ſpirit. And this is the true baptiſm, and the ſubſtance of the figure or ſhadow, which was before the figure either of baptiſm or circumciſion was, and remains when they are gone.

Object. 3. *This baptiſm in the commiſſion was to all nations; but the baptiſm of the Spirit fell only on ſome few at the beginning.*

Anſw. The promiſe of receiving the Spirit is upon believing, and it extendeth to every one that believeth. *He that believeth on me*, as the ſcripture hath ſaid, *out of his belly ſhall flow rivers of living water:* but this ſpake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him ſhould receive, *John* vii. 38, 39.

Anſwerably Peter ſaid to that great aſſembly to which he preached, whereof there were added about three thouſand ſouls, *Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jeſus Chriſt, for the remiſſion of ſins, and ye ſhall receive the gift of the Holy Ghoſt: for the promiſe is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God ſhall call*, Acts ii. 38, 39.

Indeed ſeveral gifts of the Spirit were given (ſome to one, ſome to another, according to the pleaſure of the giver), and diverſities of manifeſtations and operations of the ſame inward life and power: but every one received ſo much of the Spirit as to make him a ſon, and to cry *Abba Father*, and to waſh him.

And this is the one waſhing which all the flock are waſhed with, and ſo baptized into the one, pure, living body: and this is the ſubſtance of the figure, which ſubſtance belongs to the goſpel-ſtate; though God alſo ſaw an uſe of ſome figures in that day, and ſo inclined their hearts then to make uſe of them, which his gathered ſons and daughters (by the goſpel-Spirit

Spirit and power in this day) would make uſe of alſo, if the Lord did ſo require them. For the Lord is our judge, and the Lord is our king, the Lord is our lawgiver; who by his Spirit and power determines in every age what he would have his people do; and who leads into the way of life, truth, and holineſs, which always was and is but one and the ſame for ever.

And what if the Lord, who hath cauſed his everlaſting day to dawn again, and the everlaſting goſpel to be preached again, will have every ſhadow and figure to fly away (ſeeing they are but of one elementary nature and uſe, and not everlaſting and abiding); who may gainſay him herein, and ſay, that this is not the miniſtration of the everlaſting ſubſtance, or the ſame goſpel the apoſtles preached, becauſe ſome ſhadows which they expect, and have a ſtrong belief concerning, are not found therein?

Object. 4. *The baptiſm in this commiſſion cannot be the baptiſm of the Spirit, becauſe it is to be adminiſtered in the name of the Spirit.*

Anſw. The Greek word is not ἐν, which ſignifieth *in*; but εἰς, which ſignifieth *into*: ſo that the baptiſm here commanded is to baptize into the name, into the Father's name, into the Son's name, into the Spirit's name, by turning them from darkneſs to light, from the power of Satan to God; and then the power and life of God's Holy Spirit comes over their hearts and minds, and breaketh the power of Satan, and waſheth their conſciences from that which is dead, and plungeth or dippeth them into that which is living.

Now as God made them able miniſters of the New Teſtament (which is a ſpiritual miniſtry, an inward miniſtry), and gave them the heavenly treaſure of life and of his Spirit to miniſter with; ſo he required and expected of them the work of the ſpiritual miniſtry, which was the ſpiritual teaching and ſpiritual baptizing into the inward name.

But that there was alſo a baptizing with outward water, that I do not deny; and that it was of uſe, as a type to the weak and ceremonious ſtate the Jews were in (when Chriſt ſent forth his apoſtles to gather them out of the law-ſtate into the goſpel-ſtate) I am alſo ſatisfied in: but it hath been ſince corrupted, and ſet up above its place by apoſtates; and every one ſhould conſider and wait on the Lord, to know what God requires and will accept of him. For the kingdom of God ſtands not in meats or drinks, or any outward waſhings, nor comes in the way of man's obſervation, but in an heavenly ſeed, and in the Holy Spirit and power of life; which, happy are they who are made partakers of, baptized with, and led by. God will try every man's religion, work and practices, by the true reed or meaſuring line: bleſſed is he whoſe religion will bear that trial!

It is a great matter to know the goſpel-ſtate and miniſtration, the goſpel-Spirit and power, the goſpel-church and ordinances, the words of the holy prophets concerning the day of the goſpel, the words of Chriſt concerning the

the kingdom and power of God, the words of the apoſtles concerning the myſtery of faith, and the Word which was from the beginning.

Theſe are weighty things, and of great concernment, about which men may eaſily miſs and wreſt the ſcriptures, unleſs they be enlightened by the Lord in the renewing of their minds, and their eye kept to the holy anointing, that they may not out-run (and ſo imagine and conceive of themſelves according to their own ability of underſtanding), but know and keep to the gift and inſpiration of the Almighty, which giveth true underſtanding. For as no man knoweth the mind of a man, but man's own ſpirit within him; ſo the mind of God (in the words which his Spirit ſpake), no man knoweth but his Spirit. And there is a key of knowledge to open the words of ſcripture by, which they cannot be opened without; I mean, ſuch ſcriptures as relate to the myſtery of life and ſalvation, which was always hid from the wiſe and prudent in every age.

The phariſees had got a great deal of knowledge and underſtanding of the law of God, and propheſies of things to come, from the words of Moſes and the prophets; but they had not the key of knowledge; and *ſo they erred, not knowing the ſcriptures* (notwithſtanding all their diligent reading and ſtudying them), nor the power of God.

Every one had need be wary leſt he err after the ſame manner, and ſo ſet up his own apprehenſions from the ſcriptures, inſtead of God's truth and the mind of his Holy Spirit; for then he cannot but alſo oppoſe that which is indeed his truth, and truly agreeable to the ſcriptures, though to man's miſ-biaſſed judgment it may ſeem different or contrary.

The Lord beget in peoples hearts true deſires after himſelf, and guide them into the way wherein they may obtain all the deſires of their ſouls, which he begets in them; and the Lord preſerve all that fear him, from claſhing againſt the preſent diſpenſation of his life and power in their day and generation!

The phariſees little thought they would have killed the prophets, had they lived in their days: nay, they greatly condemned their fathers for ſo doing; and yet they themſelves crucified Chriſt. And many now little think they would have crucified Chriſt, had they lived in the days of his fleſh; and yet they diſdain, reproach, and perſecute the appearance of the ſame Spirit, life and power, as it now appeareth in his ſaints, whom he hath redeemed and dwelleth in, and in whom he manifeſteth himſelf, preacheth and ſuffereth, whatever men think of them.

Oh! bleſſed are they that are not offended in Chriſt, in the preſent appearance of his life and power! For they are not offended at him who gives life in the Father's name to all that receive him and wait upon him, and worſhip in the quickenings and virtue of his Spirit.

XXI. *Some*

XXI.

Some Queſtions anſwered, concerning the Gentiles *doing by Nature the Things contained in the Law; and ſo ſhewing the Work of the Law written in their Hearts,* Rom. ii. 14, 15.

Queſt. 1. *BY what nature did the Gentiles the things contained in the law? By the enlightened or unenlightened nature? By nature, as it lieth corrupted in the fall, or by nature in ſome meaſure renewed by the light of God's Spirit ſhining in the heart? And by what covenant was the law written in their hearts? Is not the writing of the law in the heart a promiſe of the new covenant? And can it be writ in any heart, but by virtue of the new covenant? Is not the leaſt writing of the law in the heart a degree of the promiſe? For the old covenant contains only the law in the letter; but the new covenant contains the writing of the law in the heart by the Spirit.*

Anſw. The apoſtle had ſhewed before, that that which might be known of God was manifeſt in them, for God had ſhewed it unto them; ſo that they had a manifeſtation of the light of God's Spirit in them, whereby they might diſcern his eternal power and godhead, in or by the things made; for that which is viſible ſhadows out and declares that which is inviſible, which the inward eye ſees, being opened by the Lord.

Now their hearts being joined to this manifeſtation of God within, it changeth the heart and nature; and in the changed heart and nature, God writes his law; and the law being writ in any meaſure in the heart, it hath ſome power upon man, to cauſe him to ſubject to it, and anſwer what God requires of him thereby; and ſo his heart and conſcience will accuſe him, or excuſe him, as he is found anſwering or rebelling againſt the holy light and law of God's Spirit within, manifeſting the will of God unto him. For God, though he peculiarly choſe the Jews, and in that ſenſe had caſt off the Gentiles, not chooſing them ſo to be his peculiar people, yet he was not the God of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles alſo; and had a care of their precious ſouls, viſiting them with that light, and inward manifeſtation of his Spirit, which was able to ſave and deliver them from the darkneſs. And it is teſtified, they came thus far by this inward manifeſtation of God in their hearts, and what God had ſhewed them thereby, that they knew God, *Rom.* i. 21. They had a true knowledge of God from the light within; they had a meaſure of the pure and heavenly gift: but they were not thankful for ſo great a gift, in their dark ſtate; and when they came to ſome true knowledge, did not glorify God, according to what they knew of the Lord, from the light of his Spirit within; but ran out from the meaſure of the gift into imaginations, into the conceivings of their own wiſdom; and this brought darkneſs upon them, and gave deceit power over their hearts.

Now,

Now, if they had not profeſſed themſelves to be wiſe, but kept low to the manifeſtation of God's Spirit, and denied their own wiſdom, they might have been truly wiſe; but running out from the meaſure of the gift, into their own wiſdom and thoughts, they became fools as to the true wiſdom, and wandered into groſs idolatrous conceptions, and brought great judgments from God upon themſelves. *And this was their condemnation* (not that the light of God had not ſhone in their hearts; not that that which might be known of God was not manifeſt in them; but) *that they loved their own dark wiſdom, thoughts, and conceivings, more than the manifeſtation of the light of God's Spirit within.*

Queſt. 2. *But if God was the God of the Gentiles, and thus viſited them, were any of them ſaved thereby? Did not all the Gentiles univerſally periſh, notwithſtanding this light, or manifeſtation of God's Spirit within?*

Anſw. God forbid, that the inward manifeſtation of his light and viſitation of his Holy Spirit, ſhould be of no effect to none of the Gentiles; but that they ſhould all periſh notwithſtanding it! It is teſtified here, that ſome of them came ſo far as to have their nature changed, ſo that they were a law to themſelves, and did by nature the things contained in the law; which it is impoſſible for corrupt fallen man to do. And theſe hearkening to that, and following that which led them thus far, could not chuſe but like to retain God in their knowledge, which the generality (who followed their own wiſdom) did not; whereupon God gave them over to a *reprobate mind*, ver. 28.

But now, thoſe that had the law written in their hearts, and anſwered it, fearing God, and working righteouſneſs, and liking to retain God in their knowledge, ſuch God did not give up to a reprobate mind, but kept them ſavoury to himſelf, and made them more and more partakers of the true and inward circumciſion; ſo that their want of outward circumciſion was no hinderance to them as to acceptance with God, but their uncircumciſion went with God for circumciſion.

And this their ſtate (from the inward life and power) judged the Jew, who boaſted ſo much of his ſtate, becauſe of the letter of the law, and outward circumciſion, *Rom.* ii. 26, 27. Yea, this ſtate ſhall be juſtified by God, when *God cometh to judge the ſecrets of men by Jeſus Chriſt, according to my Goſpel*, ſaid Paul, *ver.* 16. Jeſus Chriſt is the judge, who will juſtify whatever his Spirit hath made known of God the Father in the hearts of the Gentiles, and them in their ſenſe thereof, and ſubjection thereto.

That man who hath bowed to the Spirit, been taught by the Spirit (having had the law of God written in his heart), and learned obedience in the new nature, ſo as to do the things contained in the law, and hath received the inward circumciſion, which cutteth off, teacheth to deny, and keep down that which is corrupt; which will never anſwer the law, nor ſuffer the man in whom it rules to anſwer it; I ſay, he that cometh into the ſenſe of God's Spirit, and the law thereof, and into the denial of his own ſpirit, he

he bears that which in ſubſtance is the croſs of Chriſt, which crucifieth the worldly nature and ſpirit; and as he is truly circumciſed, ſo muſt he needs alſo be juſtified and ſaved under this yoke. For the Lord God of life, the Father of glory, will condemn none whom he finds in Chriſt, ſubjected to Chriſt, one in nature with the image of his Son; and Chriſt will condemn none whom he finds in his Spirit, taught by his Spirit, receiving holy laws from his Spirit, and walking in obedience thereto. And indeed I doubt not, but the merciful God hath ſaved many among the Gentiles, in all ages and generations, by the light of his holy Spirit working their minds into the ſenſe thereof, and into ſubjection thereto, according to the manifeſtation thereof within them. For it is not the having much knowledge that ſaves, but the being ſubject to the meaſure of the gift which comes from the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Saviour.

Queſt. 3. *But how can thoſe be juſtified according to Paul's goſpel, who never heard Paul's goſpel?*

Anſw. Paul's goſpel is the goſpel of Chriſt, the everlaſting goſpel, the one goſpel, which is the power which ſaves, which is manifeſted in the new covenant within; which is hid in them that are loſt, but revealed, in ſome meaſure, in all that are ſaved. Where-ever the new covenant is, there is the goſpel; where-ever the law is in any meaſure written within, there is ſomewhat of the goſpel.

If a man believe in that which ſhines within, which manifeſts the will of God within, he believes in that power which raiſed our Lord Jeſus Chriſt from the grave; and if he lay hold on it by faith, he lays hold on God's ſtrength, which inwardly viſits to ſave the ſoul; Yea, and if he obey it, he obeys the goſpel, and ſhall not be condemned for diſobedience, when Chriſt appears in flames of fire, to judge and condemn all the ungodly.

XXII.

Concerning the Rule of the Children of the New Covenant.

WHAT was the rule of the Jew outward, as to their outward ſtate? Was not the law and teſtimony outward? Did not God make the law in the letter? What is the rule of the Jew inward? Is not the law and teſtimony inward? Is not the goſpel a miniſtration of Spirit and power? And is it not a more glorious miniſtration than the law of the letter? Under the law, God ſpake by Moſes and the prophets; but under the goſpel he ſpeaketh by his Son: and do not the ſheep hear his Son's (the true Shepherd's) voice? We all, like ſheep, have gone aſtray; but (bleſſed be the Lord) are now returned to the Shepherd and *Biſhop of our ſouls:* and ſhall we not hear him, and follow him, whitherſoever he goes and leads by his holy and good Spirit? *A prophet ſhall the Lord your God raiſe up unto you, like unto me; him ſhall ye hear in all things*, ſaid Moſes. Did Moſes ſay,

My words ſhall be your rule; or, the words of the prophets ſhall be your rule then, in the days of the new covenant? Nay, he did not ſay ſo; but, *him ſhall ye hear in all things*; and he that will not hear him ſhall be cut off; yea, verily, it is ſo. He is the miniſter of life; and he that doth not hear him, and receive life, virtue, and power from him, he builds but from the letter (from what he apprehends from the letter) but is really ſeparated and cut off from the miniſtry of the life and power. *He that hath an ear, let him hear*; and he that hath an heart, let him conſider.

Now, the true Jew, the Jew inward, in whoſe heart God writes his law by the finger of his Spirit, he is to read and to meditate on the inward law written in his heart, as the outward Jew was to read and meditate on the outward law. And as, in obedience to the outward law, the outward Jew was bleſſed, and free from the curſe, and his outward enemies; ſo, in obedience to the inward law (the law of the Spirit of life), the inward Jew reaps the ſpiritual bleſſings, and becomes inwardly free from his inward and ſpiritual enemies. *Ye ſhall know the truth, and the truth ſhall make you free*, ſaid Chriſt to his diſciples; and every true diſciple in the obedience of the truth witneſſeth it.

And here the myſtery of all (which was outwardly written and teſtified of) is known; the myſtery of the law, the myſtery of the prophecies, the myſtery of the goſpel, the myſtery of the fellowſhip in and with the ſaints in light; the myſtery of the faith, which is held in a pure conſcience; the myſtery of the love, which ariſeth from the true and inward circumciſion; the myſtery of the hope, which anchors within the veil, and purifies the heart, *as he is pure*. For the true children, the children of the heavenly wiſdom, being children of the hidden life, are begotten in a myſtery; for the Spirit of God breatheth upon them no man knoweth how; and thus is every one that is born of the Spirit.

Now as they are begotten in the myſtery of life, ſo the myſtery belongs to them, and is revealed and opened in them; inſomuch that they know God not only as outwardly deſcribed, but as inwardly revealed and manifeſted in Chriſt, his bright and heavenly image.

So here the one truth is known, *even as it is in Jeſus*; the one way is known; the one name of the Lord (which is and was the ſtrong tower in all ages and generations, which the righteous did, and do ſtill, fly unto and are ſafe) is known; here the one baptiſm is known; here the one ſupper is known: yea, here the One God is worſhipped, as Father and Son, in the One Spirit and truth. So that here is no dreaming in the night, by mens comprehendings and conceivings upon the ſcriptures; but here is ſeeing with the true eye, in a meaſure of the light of the everlaſting day, which is given to the children of light, who live in the light, and walk in the light, and in the true light (which now ſhines) ſee the pure and eternal light daily more and more.

Who

Who would not count all droſs and dung (even all the knowledge he can gather and comprehend of himſelf) for the excellency of this knowledge which God gives to thoſe that are turned to the light and power of his Spirit, from the darkneſs of their own thoughts, reaſonings, and conceivings upon the ſcriptures, and do wait upon him therein, even in his holy temple, night and day? For all under the goſpel are to be prieſts to God; and all his prieſts are to wait upon him, and worſhip him in his holy temple; and to watch diligently that neither the fire go out, nor the lamp go out, nor the ſalt be wanting to ſeaſon and keep the heart melted and broken, that it may be a continual acceptable ſacrifice to the Lord.

Time was, when we alſo did believe that the ſcriptures were the only *rule of faith and practice*; and ſo bent ourſelves to ſearch out and obſerve what we found written therein, hoping thereby to have attained to that, which our ſouls deſired after. But we found all the directions thereof weak as to us, through the fleſh, and ſin had ſtill power over us; and we knew not what it was to be made free by the Son; free by the truth, free indeed from that which ſtood near to tempt and draw us into ſin. But when the light of God's holy Spirit ſhined upon us, and our minds were by him turned thereto, and his law written on our hearts, in and by the new covenant, which he revealed in us, and made with us, in and through his Son; then we felt the miniſtration of the power of the endleſs life, and were experimentally aſſured, that in the goſpel-adminiſtration, which is an adminiſtration of the Spirit and power, nothing leſs than Spirit and power can be the rule.

Mark; In the old covenant, letter (or outward directions) was a rule; but the living commandment, or Word in the heart, is the rule in the new covenant; living laws; laws livingly written; laws that give life to them in whom they are written; they are the living, powerful, and effectual rule.

Nor do we undervalue the ſcriptures, in thus giving honour to Chriſt and his Spirit; for it is their honour to teſtify of Chriſt and of his Spirit, who is the pure, certain, infallible rule of the new life, and who gives to fulfill all the holy directions, which are written in the ſcriptures, concerning the way of life.

A man, at a diſtance, may eaſily ſpeak uncertainly; but let a man be joined to God's Spirit, and feel his holy nature, movings, leadings, and guidings, he cannot but acknowledge them to be his certain and infallible rule; for nothing is more certain than God's Spirit, than the holy anointing, which is truth and no lie, *and leads into all truth, and out of every lie and deceit.*

XXIII.

Some Queries concerning the Law, or Word; Statutes, Teſtimonies, Judgments, &c. *which* David *was ſo delighted in, and prayed ſo earneſtly for.*

DAVID ſaid, *Thy Word is a lantern to my feet, and a light to my paths.* He found *it ſweeter than the honey, and the honey-comb.* He deſired *to be taught God's ſtatutes,* and *to learn the way of his precepts,* &c. as may be abundantly read, *Pſal.* xix. and in other places.

Query 1. What was this Word or Law, which there was ſuch an earneſt deſire in David after; by obſerving whereof he became wiſer than his Teachers? Was it the law of Moſes, the law outward; or was it the Word and Law of life inward?

If it be ſaid, *It was the law of Moſes*; then I query in the ſecond place:

Query 2. What rule had David from the law of Moſes to ſay, *That God deſired not ſacrifice, nor delighted in burnt-offerings?* Did not God deſire and require of his people under the law that they ſhould perform theſe things? And did he not accept of them, and delight in them, when they performed them aright in faith and obedience to him? Was not the Lord pleaſed with Abel's ſacrifice? And did not God ſmell a ſweet ſavour in Noah's ſacrifice? How could David ſay in truth, and from a true Spirit, *that God did neither deſire them, nor delight in them?*

Query 3. Ought not David to try this Spirit, which ſpake thus in him, whether it was of God or no? Should he receive a teſtimony from any Spirit ſo directly contrary in appearance to the foregoing teſtimonies of God's Spirit in the holy ſcriptures, without a full and certain evidence and demonſtration that it was the Spirit of God?

Query 4. How was David to try, or how might he certainly try this Spirit, whether it was of God or no? Was he to try it thus, whether it ſpake according to the teſtimony and law of Moſes, according to what Moſes had ſpoken in this matter, which certainly was of God, and was given by God for a law or rule to that people the Jews? If he had tried it thus, would he *not* have judged it a ſpirit different from the Spirit of Moſes, ſpeaking contrary to the law and teſtimonies which God gave forth by him? For ſacrifice and burnt-offering was ſtrictly required there, and God often teſtified his acceptance thereof, and delight therein. So that God did accept and did delight therein in one reſpect, and did not accept nor delight at all in them, in another reſpect; but his aim was at another thing, and at other ſacrifices, which David clearly ſaw. And ſo David's eye, mind, heart, and ſpirit being gathered inward, even thither where God's eye and heart was, he there had a clear ſight, and gave a certain ſound concerning what was acceptable in the eye of the Lord, and what not; and ſo ſaith, *God did not deſire*

ſire ſacrifice, nor delight in burnt-offering, Pſal. li. 16. Though the language of the law of Moſes ſpeaketh far otherwiſe, where circumciſion, ſacrifices, and ſuch outward things are expreſſed as of great value with the Lord, and as great and high privileges, which were beſtowed upon that people in that day.

Query 5. May not the ſame Spirit, or the children of God in the ſame Spirit, ſay to the Lord in this day, concerning things of the ſame outward nature, *Thou deſireſt not ſuch outward things, elſe would we perform them. Thou delighteſt not in outward ſhadows of the things of the kingdom. Thou deſireſt not outward waſhing the body with water, or eating and drinking of outward bread and wine, which avail no more than circumciſion and the paſſover. If thy delight were in things of this nature, and thou didſt require them of us, how willingly would we be found in the practice of them before thee: But thy delight is in that water which waſheth the ſoul from its filth, and in the ſouls that are waſhed therewith. And thou deſireſt to ſee thy children feeding on the living bread, the bread which comes down from heaven, and to drink of the wine which refreſheth, and maketh glad the heart both of God and man.*

Query 6. If any of the children of the Moſt High ſhould in this feel the life wherewith God hath quickened them open in their hearts, and ſuch a teſtimony ariſing from his Spirit in them, how ſhould they try whether this ſpirit and voice were of God or no? Should they look into the writings of the evangeliſts and apoſtles, to ſee whether baptiſm with outward water, and eating of outward bread, and drinking of outward wine, was ever commanded and practiſed in the apoſtles days? And if they ſuppoſe ſtrongly that it was commanded, or find it was practiſed, may they thereupon ſafely conclude that it is a wrong ſpirit, and wrong voice, that teſtifieth thus in them, and not the voice and Spirit of the Lord? Had David tried and judged thus, might not he have judged and condemned the Spirit and voice of God in his day? And if we try and judge in this manner, may not we judge and condemn the Spirit and voice of God in our day? David ſaw clearly that outward ſacrifices were not the abiding thing, but ſignifications of that which was abiding; and this ſight greatly ſhook them in his ſpirit. The Lord hath likewiſe ſhewn us clearly that outward water, bread, and wine are not the ſubſtantial, the ſpiritual, the heavenly water, the heavenly bread and wine; but of the nature of ſuch things as were to be ſhaken, that thoſe things which cannot be ſhaken may remain in the goſpel ſtate and kingdom.

Oh! therefore, let men take heed how they build, or how they judge concerning the appearances of God, by their own apprehenſions upon the letter of the ſcriptures. But let every one be careful to build upon the rock Chriſt; upon his Spirit, his life, his power inwardly revealed, which the birth which is of him knows; and that birth being kept to, reveals in and to us: but no man, by his own conceivings and apprehenſions upon the letter, ever knew, or can know, the Spirit and voice of the Lord.

And

And thus men may come, waiting here in humility and fear upon the Lord, to judge true and righteous judgment concerning the appearances of God, and the things of his kingdom; which they can never do by their own underſtanding, and comprehending things from the ſcriptures, out of the light and quickening life of God's Spirit. For man is dead, dark, and corrupt, but as he is quickened, enlightened, and his heart ſanctified by God's Holy Spirit. What can a dead man ſee? What can a dead man hear? Can he hear the living ſound before he is quickened by it? Do not the ſcriptures relate, and treat of, ſpiritual things? And can the natural man underſtand them? Can man's unholy mind underſtand the words of God's pure Holy Spirit, which were given forth through veſſels that were ſanctified (ſome from the womb), and when the Spirit of the Lord was upon them, and they gathered by his Spirit into an holy living ſenſe?

Oh! that men ſaw their need of the Lord, to open their hearts, and that fleſh might be ſilent in them, that they might come to witneſs the birth of God's Spirit, and the precious underſtanding of the heavenly things which is therein given! And then that underſtanding which is not precious, nor living, nor of God, but of themſelves, would not be of ſo great value with them: for indeed, through this great miſtake, many (ſome whereof are zealous and knowing, according to the eſteem of men) reject *that* which is of God, and ſet up *that* which is of themſelves, even of their own apprehending and conceiving; which will be bitterneſs and ſorrow in the latter end, when that eye ſhall be opened in them, which is at preſent cloſed in too too many.

Bleſſed is he who can truly ſay, *The Lord hath opened an eye in me, even the true eye, the pure eye, the living eye; and with that eye I now ſee; but with the eye wherewith I ſaw before, I now ſee not: and now I know the difference between ſeeing the ſame things with my own eye, and with the eye which God hath given me. So that now my earneſt deſire and prayer to the Lord is, to keep open in me for ever that eye which he hath opened; and alſo to keep that eye ſhut, which he in his tender mercy to me hath been pleaſed to cloſe up in me.*

And truly this is the ground of the great difference between us and others, about the things of God; for though we own the ſame things, and ſpeak of the ſame things, yet we own them not alike, nor ſpeak of them alike. Why ſo? Becauſe we ſee them with different eyes, and ſo have a different ſenſe of them.

Others call things true, and ſo acknowledge them as they apprehend them from the letter: we call things true, as they are demonſtrated to us by God's Spirit, and as we feel the virtue, life, and power of them from God, in our hearts.

Now this we are aſſured is the true way of knowledge; therefore is it our hearts deſire (in true love to all, eſpecially to thoſe in whom there are any tender breathings after God), that people might ſo wait upon the Lord,

as

as that they might be led by him into it, and quickened daily more and more by him in it.

And indeed thoſe teachings and demonſtrations of truth, which are given and received in the pure ſenſe, and in the quickening life, they are the teachings of God's Spirit according to the new covenant; which is a miniſtration not of the letter (no, not of thoſe ſhadowy or dead things which are adminiſtered therein), but of the power and life. For the law is letter, but the goſpel is Spirit and power. The goſpel-ſtate is a ſtate of fulfilling thoſe things in the Spirit and power of the endleſs life, in the new covenant, which were ſpoken of, promiſed, and ſhadowed out under the law in the old covenant.

XXIV.

Some Obſervations on 2 PET. iii. 14, 15, 16.

Wherefore beloved, ſeeing that ye look for ſuch things, be diligent; that ye may be found of him in peace, without ſpot and blameleſs. And account that the long-ſuffering of our Lord is ſalvation; even as our beloved brother Paul alſo, according to the wiſdom given unto him, hath written unto you: As alſo in all his epiſtles; ſpeaking in them of theſe things; in which are ſome things hard to be underſtood, which they that are unlearned and unſtable wreſt, as they do alſo the other ſcriptures unto their own deſtruction.

Obſerv. 1. WHAT Peter, Paul, and the reſt of the holy men of God wrote of. They wrote of the *grace of the goſpel:* they wrote of the *ſufferings of Chriſt*, and the *glory that ſhould follow, and the ſalvation of the ſoul*; and true reſt, which believers ſhould receive, and enter into in him, 1 *Pet.* i. 2, *&c.* and *Heb.* iv. 39. They wrote concerning the *times of reformation*, wherein thoſe things ſhould be reformed under the ſecond covenant, which had been amiſs under the firſt, *Heb.* viii. They wrote of the *times of reſtitution, and refreſhing from the preſence of the Lord*, Acts iii. 19. 21. For in the new covenant, there is a renewing and reſtoring; and the pure preſence of God, which refreſheth, is witneſſed and enjoyed there. They wrote of the everlaſting kingdom, the *kingdom which cannot be ſhaken*, Heb. xii. 28. which ſtands in that power which ſhakes all things that may be ſhaken, but itſelf is unmoveable. They wrote of the *day of the Lord*, the *day of the goſpel*, which brings darkneſs and confuſion upon man's ſpirit and glory, and deſolation upon his buildings, melting and diſſolving the old heavens and the old earth, wherein unrighteouſneſs had a place, and bringing forth the *new heavens* and the *new earth*, wherein dwells righteouſneſs, *Iſai.* li. 16.

For if any man be in Chriſt, there is a new creation; old things paſs away, and all things become new, at Chriſt's appearing in his glory in the heart;

to

to which they that truly believe in him, cannot but haſten; that the earth, with the works thereof, may be burnt up, and the heavens alſo; that ſo the new heavens, and the new earth, may be inwardly witneſſed and experienced, and the King of Glory found ſitting on his throne, and reigning therein.

Obſerv. 2. How Peter and Paul, with the reſt of the apoſtles and holy men of God, wrote. They wrote according to the wiſdom given unto them. They wrote not in their own wills, or according to their own wiſdom; but kept to the gift and light of the Spirit, which they had received from the Lord. They waited to obſerve the Lord go before, the Spirit of the Lord move, and alſo give ability from the meaſure and gift of life, which he had beſtowed upon them.

And theſe are the proper limits of writing and ſpeaking under the miniſtration of the goſpel; which is a miniſtration of the Spirit and power, and not of the literal knowledge of things, according to man's underſtanding and comprehenſion.

Obſerv. 3. That there are ſome things in the writings of Paul (and in the other ſcriptures alſo), hard to be underſtood; which every one that hath true life and true ſenſe, does not at firſt underſtand, but only ſuch as are grown to a capacity. For the writings of the apoſtles, and miniſtrations of the Spirit, are to ſeveral ſtates and capacities, and can only be underſtood according to the growth and capacity of each ſtate; much leſs can the carnal mind underſtand or digeſt that which is high and ſpiritual.

Obſerv. 4. That there are ſome among thoſe whom the Lord viſiteth, and reacheth to by his power, who do not attain to the knowledge of the truth, nor come to the eſtabliſhment therein: ſome that are always learning, but never come to the true, heavenly, ſpiritual knowledge of the things of God; ſome that know Chriſt only according to the letter, but not according to his Spirit and power. Some there are that learn in ſuch a way, as they can never come truly and thoroughly to underſtand: for it is God that openeth the heart and ear; it is Chriſt who hath, and giveth, the key of knowledge; but many learn what they can of the things of God and Chriſt, without having their hearts and ears opened by the Lord, and without the true key of knowledge; and ſo thoſe remain unlearned and unſtable as to the myſtery of godlineſs, as to the myſtery of life and ſalvation, and as to the nature of the things of God's kingdom.

Obſerv. 5. That thoſe who are unlearned and unſtable in the myſtery of truth, are wreſters of the ſcripture. They cannot underſtand things as they are, not having the key; and ſo they wreſt them, and ſtrive to make them ſpeak, as they apprehend and would have them.

And here in this ſtate, in this wiſdom, is both adding to, and diminiſhing from, the holy words of truth: for in many places they add of their own conceivings, and in other places diminiſh from the drift and intent of God's Spirit.

Obſerv.

Obſerv. 6. That wreſting the ſcriptures tends to the deſtruction of thoſe that do it. God is the Saviour, and the holy words of the Saviour tend to ſave; but being bent aſide by man's nature and ſpirit, they are not the ſame they were when they came from God, nor have at all that virtue and nature in them.

And indeed wreſting the ſcriptures is an high, preſumptuous, and provoking act, and brings God's diſpleaſure againſt, and curſe upon, the ſoul.

Now it is impoſſible for any man not to wreſt the ſcriptures, unleſs he keep cloſe to God's Spirit to receive from him the underſtanding of them; *for the inſpiration of the Almighty giveth underſtanding*, and not another thing. God knoweth what he intendeth, in the words he ſpake concerning the heavenly things; but man knoweth not, but as his ſpirit is opened and enlightened by the Lord.

Bleſſed is he who waiteth upon and watcheth to God's Spirit in reading the Scriptures, not leaning to his own underſtanding and apprehenſion of things, but waiting to feel his mind opened and quickened by the Lord, that in the renewings of his mind he may learn of God that which is new and living, which is not comprehended in the letter (or in literal deſcriptions of things) but in the Spirit and power itſelf, which is the limits of the new covenant, out of which the children of life are not to depart, but to abide, dwell, and grow up therein.

XXV.

Concerning the goſpel miniſtry, or right way of teaching and learning the myſtery of life and ſalvation.

WHEN Chriſt came in the *fullneſs of time*, in that body prepared for him by the Father (he who was filled with the Spirit, and anointed of God to preach the goſpel), he preached the kingdom of God, bidding men ſeek it, directing them where to ſeek it, and how they might find it; telling them, in ſeveral parables, what it was like, and where to look for it, even within their own hearts; and that they might the better diſcern it, ſhadowed out the being, nature, and properties of it, in ſeveral reſemblances. He compared *it* to a *treaſure hid in a field, which the wiſe merchant ſelleth all to buy*; to *a pearl hid in the earth*; to *a loſt piece of ſilver, which they that ſweep their own houſes, and ſearch with the true candle, may find*; to *a talent* (for ſuch is the free-gift of the pure and heavenly life); to *leaven (hidden leaven)*; to a *ſeed*; to *ſalt*, &c.

So when Chriſt ſent his apoſtles after him, in the ſame Spirit and power wherein he himſelf came and miniſtered, he ſent them to preach the ſame thing, giving them this meſſage to declare to men, *that God is light, and in him is no darkneſs at all*; *and that Chriſt is the way, the truth and the life*; *and that the life was manifeſted*; ſo that they heard, and ſaw, and taſted, and

handled of it; and ſo were to direct men how to come into fellowſhip with them in this life, and to walk in the *light, as God is in the light.*

Thus Paul likewiſe, who was ſent after the reſt, was ſent to *turn men from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.* Acts xxvi. 18.

Now people being turned to the light (where they may receive underſtanding, and feel virtue, and know the anointing, and hear the voice of the ſhepherd), thoſe who are over them in the Lord, and are made uſe of by him as inſtruments to turn their minds hither, may be ſenſible of their conditions, and may have a word of direction from God to ſpeak to them. And this teaching is not the teaching of man, but the teaching of the holy anointing; and he that heareth this teaching, heareth Chriſt; and he that rejecteth this teaching, rejects Chriſt.

Yet (though the Lord pleaſeth thus to miniſter from the heavenly treaſure in ſome veſſels, which he hath prepared for that end) people are not always to be expecting penſions, or portions of food from others without; but to know and to come to the bread and water of life in their own houſes, that there they may eat the fleſh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, as all do who have true life in them.

Now to give forth precepts of holineſs (as the way in the apoſtaſy hath been) before mens minds are turned to that which enlighteneth, and giveth power to believe and obey; that is not the way of the goſpel; but the way of the goſpel is to bring to the foundation of light and life in the particular, and ſo to diſſettle the ſpirit from that which is dead, and found it upon that which is living; that a living building of pure life, of living materials, of living ſtones, may be raiſed up unto the Lord; in which temple he dwells and appears, exerciſing his authority and power.

For indeed God dwelleth in the temples of his own building, which are built by and in his Spirit; but in all other temples, which are built out of the Spirit, and only by men (not by God) in a way of imitation from the letter, in which they ſet up the likeneſſes of things, and ſo ſet themſelves to pray and preach, according to their apprehending and forming of things; I ſay, in theſe buildings the Holy Spirit of God dwelleth not; but that ſpirit which hath thus deceived them.

And thus men erring in their hearts concerning the light, concerning the power, concerning the foundation (not knowing how it is indeed laid in Sion) concerning the ſcriptures of truth (which can only be underſtood in the light and inſpiration of the Almighty, from whence they were given forth) they can never come to know Chriſt and his Spirit livingly revealed in power in their own hearts, nor the new and living way, and how to walk therein, nor the *truth as it is in Jeſus*, according to the miniſtration of the New Teſtament (which is not after the letter, but after the Spirit), nor the new covenant, which is made with the ſoul in Chriſt, wherein all things are made new, and the old done away; nor the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus written in the heart, which blots out the other law, even the

law

law of ſin and death, and makes free therefrom; and ſo they cannot witneſs what it is to come from under the law, where ſin reigns, into and under grace, where life reigns and hath the dominion.

Who knows the truth which makes free? Could men then ſay, they ſhall never be made free from the body of ſin on this ſide the grave? *Who hath received grace for grace from Chriſt Jeſus the Lord*, and knows the virtue of it? Could men then teſtify againſt it for ſin, as if the grace of Chriſt could never deliver from it, and give dominion over it here in this life? who knows the faith which gives victory, the hope which purifies, the love which unites to God, and conſtrains unto the obedience of the goſpel, and whoſe ſtrength in the heart is ſtronger than the ſtrength of death?

Oh! the goſpel-religion, the goſpel-ſpirit, the goſpel-power, the goſpel-love, the goſpel-faith, the goſpel-obedience, the goſpel-knowledge, the goſpel-worſhip, hath been loſt for many ages and generations! And now God hath cauſed it to ſhine forth and appear again, what a flood of reproaches doth the dragon ſend forth againſt it? And how do men ſtrive to uphold their dead knowledge, and their dead buildings, their dead ways, their dead worſhips, *&c.* which they think highly of, and magnify; blaſpheming that which is living, which came from God, is accompanied with his power, and hath the evidence and demonſtration of his Spirit going along with it!

Well, *all fleſh is graſs, and its beauty ſhall fade.* Let it paint and make a flouriſh as long as it can; yet the breath of the Lord hath blown upon it, and it is already withered, and ſhall wither daily more and more. But the Word of the Lord, which quickeneth and changeth the heart (which his deſpiſed ſervants have been viſited with, and have teſtified, and do teſtify of) ſhall abide for ever, when that ſpirit, wiſdom, and religion, which hath oppoſed, ſhall vaniſh like ſmoke, and ſink under eternal condemnation.

XXVI.

A few Words concerning the old and new Covenant; with ſome Queries thereupon.

THE *old covenant* was that covenant which God made with that people the Jews, when he took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt outward. The *new covenant* is that covenant which God makes with the ſoul, when he takes it by the hand to lead it out of Egypt inward, which is the land of darkneſs and pollution.

The *old covenant* was made with the outward people, with the ſeed of Abraham according to the fleſh. The *new covenant* is made with the inward people, with the ſeed of Abraham according to the ſpirit, according to the faith, according to the promiſe: for in this covenant, not they that are the children of the fleſh are of Abraham; but the children of the promiſe are accounted for the ſeed.

The *old covenant* was made by Moſes, the ſervant, who was *faithful in all his houſe as a ſervant*. The *new covenant* is made by Chriſt, the Lord and king of his church and people, who is faithful in *quickening them all, reconciling them all, interceding for them all*, according to the tenor and way of this covenant.

The *old covenant* conſiſted in laws and directions outward, which that nation and people had fully and exactly given them from God, above all nations and people of the earth. The *new covenant* conſiſts in life and Spirit inward, which the holy people, the renewed people, the redeemed people, are viſited with, and made partakers of, above all other people.

Under the *old covenant*, though the Lord did great things before the eyes of that people in Egypt, and exerciſed them with ſigns, miracles, and trials alſo in the wilderneſs; yet the Lord did not give them an heart to perceive, and eyes to ſee, and ears to hear: unto that day, as mentioned in *Deut.* xxix. 2, 3, 4. the veil was over their hearts. But the *other covenant* contains the *giving of a new heart*, the *opening of the blind eye*, the *unſtopping of the deaf ear*, the *writing the law in the heart*, the *putting the pure fear in the inward parts*, the *putting God's Spirit within them*, and ſo cauſing them to walk in his ſtatutes, and to keep his judgments, and do them. Whereupon theſe Queries are in my heart:

Query 1. Will not this covenant inwardly reform the heart, ſoul, mind, and conſcience, and amend all in this inward, ſpiritual, renewed people, which was amiſs in that outward, earthly, unrenewed people?

Query 2. Doth not the ſoul begin to enter into this covenant ſo ſoon as ever it anſwers the Lord in the viſits of his love, turning from ſin unto him?

Query 3. How precious is that grace of the goſpel which brings into this covenant? For the people of the Jews came into the old covenant by the law which was given by Moſes; but the children of the new covenant come thereinto by receiving the *grace and truth which comes by Jeſus Chriſt*.

Query 4. Can any poſſibly enter into the covenant without coming to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and receiving grace from him? Can obſerving precepts, and directions from ſcripture, bring into this covenant? Or is it the receiving grace, truth, life in the inward parts, from Chriſt the Lord, which brings into this covenant? Oh! wait to know the miniſtration of the goſpel, and covenant of life, with the entrance thereinto, O all that truly deſire the ſalvation of your ſouls!

Query 5. Wherein doth the miniſtry of this covenant conſiſt; or how is the teaching thereof? Is it by getting a form of knowledge out of the letter, or miniſtring the letter? Is it not a miniſtration not of the letter, but of the Spirit? The apoſtle ſaid ſo, who knew what it was, and was made an able miniſter thereof, by God, 2 *Cor.* iii. 6. Truly none can miniſter goſpelly, none can miniſter under the new covenant, but thoſe that miniſter from and in the Spirit.

XXVII.

Queries on ROM. vith, viith, *and* viiith Chapters.

From CHAP. vi.

Query 1. WHAT is it to be baptized into Chriſt? Is it not to be baptized into his death? Are not they that are truly baptized into Chriſt buried with him by baptiſm into death? That *like as Chriſt was raiſed up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even ſo they alſo ſhould walk in the newneſs of life.* How can they that are dead to ſin live any longer therein?

Query 2. What was the end of Chriſt's manifeſtation in the fleſh, and ſending his Spirit? Was it not to deſtroy the works of the devil; to crucify the old man, that the *body of ſin* might be deſtroyed, that henceforth we ſhould not ſerve ſin?

Query 3. Is he that is crucified with Chriſt, and dead unto ſin, freed from ſin? Doth the truth of Chriſt, the life of Chriſt, the Spirit of Chriſt, the Power of Chriſt, make thoſe that receive and obey it free indeed; ſo that ſin cannot have dominion over them, to make them do what they hate, or to hinder them from doing what God requires? Did not Chriſt himſelf die to ſin once, but now lives to God? And are not believers after this manner to reckon themſelves dead indeed unto ſin, but alive unto God, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord?

Query 4. Have believers received power from Chriſt *(who had all power in heaven and earth given unto him)* to become ſons? Have they received the Spirit of the Father, which hath dominion over ſin? Can they ſtop or hinder the reign of it in their mortal body, and refuſe obeying the luſts thereof, and not yield their members inſtruments of unrighteouſneſs unto ſin?

Query 5. Are believers alive from the dead? And can they yield their members ſervants to righteouſneſs, for God to work in and by them, according to his will and pleaſure? Can they ever come to ſuch a ſtate, as to do nothing againſt the truth, but for the truth? *to do all things through Chriſt that ſtrengthens them?*

Query 6. Is this true, that to whom people yield themſelves ſervants to obey, his ſervants they are to whom they obey, whether of *ſin unto death*, or of *obedience unto righteouſneſs?*

Query 7. Do men, or is it poſſible for men, in receiving, joining to, and obeying the truth, to be made free from ſin, and become the ſervants of righteouſneſs?

Query 8. Cannot men have their fruit unto holineſs, and at the end everlaſting life, without being made free from ſin, and becoming ſervants to God? Is the *wages of ſin death* after a man hath believed? After a man is turned

turned from ſin to Chriſt, if he hearken afterwards to Satan and commit ſin, doth he reap death thereby? See alſo *Gal.* vi. 7, 8.

From CHAP. vii.

Query 1. What law is that which hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth; and what life is that in man which the law hath dominion over?

Query 2. How doth a man become dead to the law, that he might be married to another, even to *him who is raiſed from the dead, that he ſhould bring forth fruit unto God?* Can any be married to the raiſed living huſband, but the quickened, raiſed and living ſoul? And can any elſe bring forth fruit to God?

Query 3. What is the ſtate of being in the fleſh, and of knowing the things of God after the fleſh? of receiving directions and practiſing duties in that ſtate? Do not the motions of ſin (which all outward laws and directions do but ſtir up, but cannot overcome) work in the members there, in that ſtate, to bring forth fruit unto death?

Query 4. How comes a man to be delivered from the law? Is it not by the death of that in him which held him captive unto ſin? And why doth God quicken with a new life, and kill in the hearts of his that wherein they were held? Is it not that they ſhould ſerve him in newneſs of Spirit, and not in the oldneſs of the letter? For the letter killeth, and the literal ſervice and worſhip is dead, and that worſhip alone is living and goſpel-worſhip, which is in the newneſs of the Spirit; for ſuch alone the Father ſeeketh to worſhip him, and ſuch worſhip alone he accepteth.

Query 5. Is the law ſin becauſe it ſtirs up ſin? Nay; the law itſelf is not ſin, but that which diſcovers and makes it known: for no man can know ſin, but by the law or light which diſcovers it.

Query 6. How is ſin dead without the law? And how doth it take occaſion by the commandment to work in the heart all manner of concupiſcence?

Query 7. How was Paul alive without the law once? Could he ſacrifice, could he read the ſcriptures, could he be knowing, could he be zealous, could he walk according to the law in the letter blameleſs in that ſtate? See *Phil.* iii. 4, 5, 6.

Query 8. What commandment was that, upon the coming whereof ſin revived, and he died? Was it the law in the letter, or the law in the Spirit? He ſaith, *the commandment which was to life, he found to be unto death.* What is the commandment which is to life? Is it not the *word nigh in the mouth and heart?* See *Deut.* xxxix.

Query 9. How came ſin to take occaſion by the commandment (which comes forth holily, and as juſt and good from God), to deceive and ſlay him? What was it which it deceived and ſlew? Was it not that part which thought it could obey and ſerve God, if his will was made manifeſt; which now, when the law indeed came, found it could not? Nor can any man obey

obey the holy law of life, till this nature, wiſdom and ſpirit, be in ſome meaſure ſlain in him.

Query 10. Doth then the holy law of God, which God ordains and ſends unto life, miniſter death to the ſoul? Or doth ſin (being provoked and ſtirred up to put forth its ſtrength to ſave its life, and retain its dominion in the heart, take occaſion by the commandment to work death, and ſhew the exceeding evil and ſinfulneſs of its nature?

Query 11. Is not the law ſpiritual? Can ſin gain any ſtrength or advantage by that which is ſpiritual? Surely, nay; but it taketh occaſion then to tyrannize over and captivate me (who am carnal and ſold under it), till the power of the Lord make a change in my ſtate, working me from under the dominion of it.

Query 12. How is it with the ſoul in the ſtate of captivity, when ſin is revived by the law, the ſoul dead as to its former life and ſtrength, and not yet come under the dominion and power of grace? Doth it not do what it allows not, and not do the good it would? Yea, doth not the enemy oftentimes even force it to do what it hates, the ſoul being as yet weak in the faith, whereby alone ſtrength is received to reſiſt him? Is not this ſtate experienced in ſome meaſure by every traveller? Doth not every one feel the ſtrength of ſin, and his own inability, either to *will or do of himſelf that which is good*, &c. before he witneſs help and deliverance from the Lord?

Query 13. Doth God impute to the ſoul, or to ſin, the effect of this captivity, and work of ſin and Satan upon the heart, againſt the bent and earneſt deſires and endeavours of the ſoul?

Query 14. When is the ſoul in this ſtate of trouble and captivity? Is it not after ſome appearance and operation of God's power in the heart? Is it not after the mind is turned from ſin, and deſireth to be joined to the holy law of life and obey it? Is it not after God hath wrought the will in the mind to do good; ſo that the conſent is given to the law, and the will is preſent; but how to perform that which is good it findeth not, becauſe faith is yet ſo weak, and ſin and unbelief ſo ſtrong in the heart?

Query 15. Is not this the time of bitter warfare, and day of terrible diſtreſs in the heart, and of feeling the wickedneſs of the eſtate, becauſe of ſin; and of crying out, and longing after the ſalvation and deliverance of the goſpel? Oh! *woe is me, who ſhall deliver me, poor captive*, ſaith the ſoul, *in this ſtate!*

Query 16. Is not God very tender to the ſoul in this ſtate, daily blotting out, and not imputing ſin? Oh! if it were not for the exceeding mercy and tender love, and help of the Lord in this ſtate, it were impoſſible for any ever to come through it! But thanks be to God, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, who both upholds in it, and carries through it, ſo that a change comes to be witneſſed, and a better ſtate known by thoſe who conſent not

to

to ſin; but continue in taking part with the good, holy, and ſpiritual law of life againſt it.

From CHAP. viii.

Query 1. What is that ſtate wherein there is no condemnation? Is not that the ſtate of the redeemed ſouls in Chriſt? Doth not condemnation follow, where there is ſin and diſobedience? See *Heb.* ii. 1, *&c.* Doth not God condemn ſin, and the ſoul becauſe of ſin, till it be driven from ſin by the law unto Chriſt, and learn of him to walk as he walked, even *not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit?* For to the Spirit, to the Seed, to the heavenly man, there is no condemnation; nor to them that walk after the Spirit.

Query 2. How come any to walk after the Spirit? Can any walk after the Spirit, but as they are made free, by the power of Chriſt revealed in their hearts againſt the power of Satan, from the law of ſin and death? Will not ſin and death captivate a man, and entangle him in luſts, evil motions and works, till their ſtrength be broken in him, and his ſoul delivered and ſet free therefrom?

Query 3. How doth the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus make free from the law of ſin and death? Is it not thus? Did not God condemn ſin in Chriſt's fleſh? and doth not the ſame Spirit and law of life condemn it in ours alſo, and bring the judgment and juſtice of the holy law of life over it? And ſo bringing the ſoul off from that which is unholy, unto the holy and righteous Spirit and nature of Chriſt; and bringing it to walk out of the deadneſs of ſin, in the newneſs of life; it is removed from thence where the condemnation is, thither where the condemnation cannot come: for in Chriſt, in the new nature, in the heavenly image, in the newneſs of the Spirit, there never was, nor ever can be, any condemnation.

Query 4. Would God have the righteouſneſs of the law fulfilled in his children? Would he have them walk exactly with him in the new covenant, which both comprehends and exceeds the righteouſneſs of the old covenant? Conſider whether Chriſt fulfilling the old covenant be their righteouſneſs, or his fulfilling the new in them and for them: for he both doth away their unrighteouſneſs, and alſo brings in the righteouſneſs into them, which is of his own pure, heavenly and everlaſting nature. Is not he the image of God? Is not he righteouſneſs? And when he is in them, and they changed into his nature and Spirit, is not he their righteouſneſs? Oh! wait to determine this thing, all that deſire to know and partake of the righteouſneſs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in the true and pure ſenſe of life, and in the evidence and demonſtration of God's Holy Spirit.

Query 5. Do not all men act according to the principle, whether of fleſh or Spirit, to which their minds are joined? Do not they which are of the fleſh mind, favour, approve, deſire after, and delight in that which is fleſhly? But they that are after the Spirit, do not they mind, favour, deſire after, approve,

approve, and delight in the things of the Spirit? Therefore is not this of great concern to all to conſider, not ſo much what their profeſſion and appearance is outwardly, as what their root is inwardly, and what nature, ſpirit and growth, they and their religion are of?

Query 6. What doth it produce to have the mind exerciſed by the fleſh? Doth it not produce death? Is not the nature, ſpirit, and wiſdom of the fleſh ſeparated from God's nature, who is Life? and can it bring forth any thing in the heart but corruption and death? But the minding of the other principle, and being exerciſed by the other principle, that produceth life and peace; doth it not? Let all that have inwardly experienced theſe things, aſſent and teſtify in ſpirit before the Lord to his praiſe.

Query 7. Is not the fleſh enmity againſt God? Can any thing which is enmity againſt God, who is the quickening life, do any thing but deaden and kill where it finds entrance? Life and peace is witneſſed in ſubjection to God, who gives it to them that obey the law of his Spirit. Is that which is in the enmity, and ſtands in the enmity, ſubject (or can it be ſubject) to the holy law of God? Nay; there muſt be a new creation felt in the heart, before there can be a ſubjection to that which is pure and living.

Query 8. Can any men that are in the fleſh, that are not truly and inwardly changed by the Spirit and power of the goſpel; I ſay, can they pleaſe God in any thing they do? Can they believe, or pray, or read the ſcriptures, or practiſe any thing they obſerve from the ſcriptures, ſo as to pleaſe God thereby? Nay ſurely, without changing the principle, without having the heart changed by God's power, there is no right believing, praying, or doing any thing to pleaſe God. This makes moſt mens religion and performances unſavoury, becauſe they know not, nor are turned to, and guided by, that principle and ſeed of life, which ſeaſons and makes ſavoury.

Query 9. How may a man know whether he be in the fleſh, or in the Spirit? If he be in the Spirit, doth not the Spirit dwell in him? For the Spirit createth anew, and the Spirit dwelleth in that which he new-createth. It is the ſtrong man armed who keeps and dwells in the old houſe; but the Spirit of Chriſt keeps and dwells in the new houſe: and if any man have not the Spirit of Chriſt (notwithſtanding all his religion, knowledge, faith, prayers, *&c.*) he is none of his.

Query 10. If Chriſt, the quickening Spirit (the living power) be in a man, doth he not kill ſin there? Is not the body dead there becauſe of ſin? Can ſin live there, where Chriſt dwells? and is not his Spirit life there, to quicken in and unto righteouſneſs? Yea, is it poſſible that Chriſt ſhould dwell in any man's heart by his Spirit, and his Spirit not be quickening the mortal body in which he dwells? Oh! how precious is it to feel the quickening life and power! This is a daily ſeal of the true religion; and the daily operation of God's Spirit in the hearts of his children, ſhews who dwells there.

Query 11. To which are we debtors, who are redeemed to God by his Spirit and power? Are we debtors to the flesh, to live after the flesh, which brings into bondage to sin and death? Or are we debtors to that Spirit and power of life, which hath made us alive to God, and preserveth us in life, and quickeneth us unto life, day by day?

Query 12. Is it possible that any one should come to life, but by the mortifying, denying, and destroying of that which nourisheth sin, and leads into death? and what can do that but the power of God's Spirit?

Query 13. Are not all the sons of God led by his Spirit! Oh! how necessary then is it for every man to be sure, both that he hath received God's Spirit, and that he be led by it?

Query 14. What is the spirit of bondage, which begetteth fear when God awakeneth the soul? and what is the Spirit of adoption, whereby the soul can cry *Abba, Father?* Can any cry *Abba, Father*, but those that are begotten of God's Spirit? Many men put up requests, and are able to make long prayers (perhaps such as may be taking to the eye of man's wisdom), and yet know not that Spirit which begetteth life in the heart, and teacheth to cry *Abba, Father*.

Query 15. Is it not a precious thing for people truly to feel the Spirit of God bearing witness, with their spirits, that they are God's children; heirs of God, and co-heirs with Christ; and so leading them through the sufferings, that they may come to partake with him of his glory? But do any come to partake of his glory, who do not first come through the sufferings?

XXVIII.

A further Testimony in brief concerning the Work of GOD upon our Hearts, who are called QUAKERS.

IT hath been with us, and so we have felt it from the Lord, just as is expressed, *Tit.* ii. 5. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.

We are a people who have been greatly distressed (many of us) for want of that life and power which was revealed in the apostles days. We are a race of travellers, who have been travelling out of the nature, wisdom, spirit, and course of this world (which is vain and passeth away) towards our resting-place. We have wandered from mountain to hill, from one way of religion to another, seeking after him whom our souls dearly loved. Indeed the watchmen have often laughed at us and mocked us, wishing us to return to them; but that would not still the cry of our souls, which were sick with earnest desire, not after formal ways of religion, but after life and immortality, that it might be again brought to light (as it had been in the apostles days), and our souls made partakers thereof. Now, after many

many a weary ſtep and deep ſickneſs of heart, when we were come even near to deſpair of ever finding and enjoying what our ſouls ſo ſorely longed after, it pleaſed the Lord at length in his tender mercy to appear among us, and by the directions of his Holy Spirit to turn our minds inwards; ſhewing us, that *that* which we ſought without, was to be found within: telling us, that there was the kingdom, which was not to be found by obſervations without, but by meeting with, and ſubjecting to, the light and power of life within. And when we were ſollicitous how to know it from the darkneſs and deceit within, this anſwer was given us from the Lord; its nature will diſcover itſelf; it will turn againſt all darkneſs and deceit in the heart; it will find out and reprove whatever is reproveable, and furniſh the ſoul with ſtrength againſt it. Oh! bleſſed ſound from the Lord God of Life, who thus drew our hearts to wait upon him; and ſhewed us how to wait, and what to wait for, and where we might meet with that which our hearts ſo exceedingly deſired and panted after! And truly as our minds were thus turned inwards, the holy light did ſhine upon us from the Sun of righteouſneſs, and the pure life and nature from the Son of God did ſpring up in us; and we felt the power of God revealed in our hearts, and the old image of ſin and unrighteouſneſs daily defacing, and our ſouls creating anew (in Chriſt Jeſus) into the holy and heavenly image. So that here we felt the mercy of God, which ſaved his people in all ages, reaching to us alſo; and his Spirit regenerating, renewing, and waſhing us, with the water and blood which cleanſeth: and as we were regenerated and renewed more and more, ſo we were ſtill waſhed more and more, and came more into fellowſhip with Chriſt in his death; and were alſo raiſed up by him more and more into his life, and taught to ſet our affections more on things above, and leſs on things below; which are of an enſnaring and entangling nature, in which the minds of the ſons of men are held captive, until they meet with that royal, excellent, noble Spirit and power, which breaks the chains and fetters of darkneſs, and redeems out of them. And now we can teſtify (in true ſenſe, and in the evidence and demonſtration of God's Spirit) that not by working, willing, or running of ourſelves; not by any works of righteouſneſs, which we had done or could do; but by the tender mercy of God viſiting, and by the operation of his Holy Spirit upon us (in and through regenerating, renewing, and waſhing us from that which defiled and ſtained our ſouls, and made them guilty in his ſight, and liable to his wrath), were we ſaved from the wrath to come, and from the ways of tranſgreſſion wherein we walked, before our God thus viſited us.

Now it is the ſincere deſire of our ſouls, that this tender mercy of God might take effect on others alſo; and that they might likewiſe be lighted by him to the place where wiſdom teacheth her children, and where the true redemption of the ſoul is witneſſed, and the true knowledge of the Father and of Chriſt (which is life eternal), given and received; that people might not be hardened to deſtruction, and deceived of their ſouls, by a fooliſh and

vain religion, wherein is not the ſubſtance and kernel (which alone can nouriſh up to life eternal), but only ſome ſhew and appearance thereof, which cannot really ſatisfy that which is indeed begotten and born of God's Spirit.

XXIX.

A brief Account of the Ground of our Worſhip, and how it cometh to paſs that we cannot conform to the Spirit of this World, or to the Wills of Men therein, but only to the Spirit and Will of our God.

WE fear God, who made heaven and earth, whoſe power is over all, who hath cauſed the light of his Holy Spirit to ſhine in our hearts, thereby teaching us how to worſhip him acceptably in Spirit and truth; which worſhip he hath required of us, that we meet together ſo to do in thoſe aſſemblies, which he hath gathered by his power, and ordereth by his Spirit, either in ſilence or ſound of words, according to his pleaſure.

And God, who hath appointed us thus to worſhip him, hath power over our bodies and ſouls, and can deſtroy and caſt both into hell, if we ſhould deny the truth and way of worſhip which he hath taught us. Yea, if we ſhould deny this way of worſhip, we ſhould deny Chriſt, and be denied by him before his Father in heaven. For he himſelf hath ſaid, that neither at the mountain of Samaria, nor at Jeruſalem, ſhould men worſhip; but they that worſhip the Father, muſt worſhip him in Spirit and in Truth. Now men cannot worſhip in Spirit and in Truth as they pleaſe, or in the ways of their own inventing and ſetting up; but he that worſhippeth in Spirit and Truth muſt firſt be made ſpiritual; and then muſt wait in ſilence of the fleſh for God's Spirit to quicken him unto ſpiritual worſhip. For they that worſhip otherwiſe than thus, worſhip at beſt but after the oldneſs of the letter, and not in the newneſs of the Spirit, which is the only worſhip God ſeeketh, and requireth, under the New Teſtament.

Beſides, we have found God's preſence with us, and bleſſing upon us, in this way of worſhip; and our hearts greatly melted and warmed therein, and power given us over our paſſions and corruptions inwardly, and to order our lives and converſations holily, righteouſly, and innocently outwardly: which preſence of God, and holy power over ſin and vanity, affections and luſts, we would not loſe for ten thouſand worlds. And what an unjuſt and unthankful thing were it in us to turn from this way of worſhip which God hath called us to, where we have met with theſe things, to that way of worſhip where we did not meet with theſe things, and where others do not, nor can, meet with them? For theſe things are only to be met with in that way of worſhip which God hath appointed and bleſſed, and not in that way of worſhip which man hath invented and ſet up, which every profane and wicked perſon can cry up and enjoy his luſts under; but they that are otherwiſe taught of God can by no means ſubmit to, without grievouſly ſinning againſt him.

And

Now magiſtracy was never ordained of God, nor power given to men by him, to force people to ſin againſt him.

And is it not a great ſin to worſhip againſt one's faith, according to the wills and precepts of men, contrary to the teachings and requirings of his Holy Spirit? Are not they that do thus hypocrites? Was power given unto magiſtrates to make them hypocrites; or to encourage people unto truth and uprightneſs both towards God and men? To wait upon God in his fear, to be taught by him the true way of worſhip, is not this good and right in his ſight? And to worſhip in Spirit and truth as he teacheth, is not this to do well? And was not the magiſtrate ordained of God to be a terror to evil-doers, and a praiſe to them that do well? The magiſtrate ſaith we do not obey him; but he ſhould rather enquire whether he doth not require that of us wherein we cannot obey him, without ſinning againſt the Lord, and againſt the light of his Holy Spirit in our own hearts and conſciences, and ſo bring God's wrath upon us, and provoke him to deſtroy us both body and ſoul? But if men will needs be angry with us for ſerving the Lord, and worſhipping him according to his holy law and will, we had better undergo their anger and unjuſt puniſhments for obeying our God, than come under his wrath for diſobedience. And God is our witneſs that no ſtubbornneſs, wilfulneſs, or contempt of authority, engageth us in the leaſt to continue through many ſufferings in this way of meeting together to worſhip our God; but only obedience to the goſpel and power of Chriſt, which we have found this viſitation and miniſtration of life from on high to be to us, by its redeeming us out of ſin, and from the ſpirit of this world. And the ſame that hath redeemed us in ſome meaſure, hath required us thus to wait on the Lord to have our redemption perfected; and in thus waiting upon him, it is daily added to, and carried on; bleſſed be the name of our God. But if we ſhould forbear thus to meet, we ſhould turn from, ſin againſt, and provoke our God (who hath already redeemed us in part, and is ſtill further and further redeeming us), and turn back to Egypt, Sodom, and Babylon, where is the darkneſs, luſt and confuſion, and not the holy order of God's Spirit, neither in the converſations nor in the worſhips of thoſe that dwell and abide there.

XXX.

Some Queries concerning knowing and owning the Lord Jeſus Chriſt truly and aright, who hath been the only Saviour and Redeemer in all Ages and Generations; and there never was, and never ſhall be, any other.

Query 1. WHETHER they know or own the Lord Jeſus Chriſt truly and aright, who only know and own him as outwardly deſcribed and related of in the ſcriptures, but know him not inwardly revealed in their hearts, as the Word and power of eternal life? Or whether they are the true knowers and owners of Chriſt, who know and own

own him not only according to a literal deſcription of him in the ſcriptures, but alſo as inwardly revealed by the Father, witneſſing him formed in them, and their hearts changed into his holy and heavenly image, by virtue of his inward appearance, and operation of his Spirit and power in them?

Query 2. Whether they truly and rightly know the death and reſurrection of Chriſt, who know only the relation of them in the ſcriptures, but are not made conformable to his death, nor raiſed by him in the power of his life? Or whether they are the true and right knowers of his death and reſurrection, who are buried with him by the holy baptiſm of his Spirit into death, who through the Spirit have mortified the deeds of the body, and witneſs the holy ſeed of life raiſed and living in them, and themſelves raiſed and made alive to God, in and through the power of the Father revealed in them?

Query 3. Whether they truly and rightly confeſs Chriſt to be the Lord and king, prieſt and prophet of his people, who confeſs it only from the reading of it to be ſo in the ſcriptures? Or whether they are not the true and right confeſſors of Chriſt's kingly, prieſtly, and prophetical offices, who witneſs him exerciſing them in them; who witneſs him overcoming and reigning over ſin and death in them; over whom other lords, even the ſpirits and powers and darkneſs, have not dominion now, but Chriſt only; and in whom he miniſtereth as in his temple, offering ſpiritual gifts and ſacrifices to his Father, and who alſo propheſieth there, opening and revealing the myſteries of his kingdom to them, as he doth to the leaſt babes that are truly begotten and born of his Spirit?

Query 4. Do they or can they truly know Chriſt's voice, who never experienced the Word of life ſpeaking in their hearts? Where doth the falſe prophet ſpeak? Doth he not ſpeak within? And where doth the true Shepherd ſpeak? Doth he not ſpeak within alſo, even in the heart? And do not the ſheep hear, know, and diſtinguiſh his voice there?

Query 5. Who knoweth the truth as it is in Jeſus? Do any do ſo but thoſe that have felt the drawings of the Father; come unto the Son in the drawings; and received life from and abide in him? Do any know the truth in Jeſus but thoſe that witneſs virtue, freedom, life, and power, by the truth in ſome meaſure? Doth not that ſaying and promiſe of Chriſt (*John* viii. 31, 32.) ſtand firm in every age? *If ye continue in my words, then are ye my diſciples indeed. And ye ſhall know the truth, and the truth ſhall make you free.*

Query 6. Who are ingrafted into Chriſt? Can any one be ingrafted into him but as he is inwardly revealed and made known? Yea, is not he in them who are ingrafted into him, and are not they in him? Is not he that is truly regenerated cut off from the old ſtock within, from the root of bitterneſs within; and is not he implanted into the new ſtock within alſo; inſomuch as he ſenſibly feeleth the pure holy root of life bear him, and the

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ap thereof ſpringing up in him, cauſing him to bring forth fruit to God in due ſeaſon?

Query 7. Who prayeth in the name of Chriſt? Doth he who ſaith theſe or ſuch-like words in the beſt ſeriouſneſs and ſenſibleneſs he can in his own will, "Hear me, O Lord, for Chriſt's ſake: I confeſs I am unworthy; but "I beg of thee in his name who is worthy, *&c.*" or he who prayeth in the child's nature, on the Father's breathing upon him, in the Spirit of the Father which is given him, and in the time and will of the Father? He that doth but ſigh or groan in and from the Spirit, doth not that ſigh or groan aſcend up to the Father in Chriſt's name? Alas! how outward is mens religion! But the inward ſtreams and current of the true, pure, and heavenly religion they know not.

Query 8. Who receiveth Chriſt? Do any but thoſe who receive and bow to the light of his Spirit inwardly revealed? Can any receive him but they that hear his knocks and open to him? Do any know the inward voice of the Shepherd, beſides the Sheep? And can any receive his voice, and not receive him? And can any who are ignorant of, and refuſe his voice, receive him?

Query 9. Who do truly and rightly believe in Chriſt? Do any do ſo, or can any do ſo, but they who firſt feel life, from whence the true faith ſprings? Ah! that all the faith in men were daſhed, but what comes from life, unites to life, and abides in life!

Query 10. Whom doth Chriſt gather from the barren mountains? Are they not his ſheep; his poor, diſtreſſed, ſcattered, wounded, fainting, and almoſt famiſhed ſheep? What are the mountains he gathers them from? Are they not the ſeveral dead ways, worſhips, and gatherings without life? And out of whoſe mouths doth he reſcue them? Is it not out of the mouths of the ſhepherds that made a prey of them; who fed them not with life, with virtue, with pure living knowledge; but with words, with dreams, with apprehenſions of their own, concerning the things of God? And whither doth he lead them? Is it not to his own holy mountain (which is exalted by God, and eſtabliſhed over and on top of all thoſe other mountains) where the freſh paſtures are, and where the ſtreams of life flow, and run plentifully?

Query 11. Who are Chriſt's kindred according to the Spirit? Who is his mother, ſiſter, brother? Are any ſo but they that do the will of the Father? And is this obedience a working according to the law, or of the righteouſneſs of the law? Nay; is it not rather of the nature and righteouſneſs of the goſpel? Is not that which floweth from him who is righteous, righteous alſo; even as he is righteous.

Query 12. To whom doth Chriſt give power to become ſons? Is it not to as many as truly and rightly receive him, and believe in his name? *To as many as received him of old, to them he gave power to become the ſons of God.*

God. Doth he not do ſo ſtill? What is it to receive power to become a ſon? Let the heart that hath received it anſwer; for the Notioniſt cannot.

Query 13. What is the reaſon ſo many who are high in notion and profeſſion, cannot own this precious appearance of the Spirit, power, and glory of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in this our day, in the hearts of his children, after the long night of darkneſs, which hath ſo long covered the earth? Is not this the very reaſon, even becauſe they do not truly and rightly know either the Father or the Son? Can any ſee or know him that begets, and with the ſame eye not ſee or know him that is begotten of him? Can any love Chriſt, and not love his brethren? Is not wiſdom, in her appearances, juſtified of her children in this age, as well as formerly?

Query 14. Are there two Chriſts, one manifeſted without, and another revealed within; or is it the ſame Lord Jeſus Chriſt who in the days of his fleſh appeared outwardly, that was afterwards manifeſted within as the myſtery of life, and hope of glory; who alſo in this our day is revealed and made known within unto his, by the ſame eternal Spirit?

Query 15. He that truly and rightly knoweth the Spirit of Chriſt, doth he not know Chriſt alſo? Even as he that knoweth Chriſt muſt needs know the Father alſo. Are not the Father and Chriſt one? Could any one ſee Chriſt, even in the days of his fleſh, and not ſee the Father alſo? (ſee *John* xiv. 9.) So is not Chriſt and the Spirit one in like manner? And are not all that are truly of Chriſt, begotten by, gathered into, and do they not live and walk in, that one Spirit of his? And do they not there know the things of God as they are, and teſtify of what they have ſeen and known? Though they that are out of that Spirit and power know neither him, nor the teſtimony of life that comes by him, no more than the Jews knew his appearance outwardly in their day.

A Query added concerning Imputation.

Query IN what ſtate was Abraham when faith was imputed to him for righteouſneſs? Was he in the ungodly ſtate; in the ſtate of unbelief and diſobedience to the Spirit and power of the Lord; or was he in the ſenſe of God's power, in the belief of him who could raiſe up his ſon from the dead, and in the performance of obedience unto him, giving up his ſon at the Lord's command?

And in what ſtate muſt we be, when we witneſs faith imputed to us alſo for righteouſneſs? Muſt we not be in the ſenſe of the ſame power, and in the belief of it, and in the obedience of faith? Read *Rom.* iv. and conſider: for the righteouſneſs of the goſpel is not imputed in or by the works of the law, but in the obedience of faith.

It is true, God juſtifieth the ungodly; through faith he makes them juſt and godly; but doth he juſtify or accept them in the ungodly ſtate? Doth he not firſt make a change in them by his power? Doth he not firſt in ſome meaſure purify their hearts by faith? The

The CONCLUSION.

THERE are a great many who profeſs the goſpel ſtate, and that they are in Chriſt, and under grace, and freely juſtified by grace; ſo that they look upon their ſins as covered by the Lord, and not imputed to them, they believing (as they pretend) in the name of his Son, and obeying his goſpel, *&c.* I ſay, many profeſs theſe things, who do not at all know what they mean truly and rightly, as in God's ſight.

For it is a great matter to be in Chriſt, even to *know him that is true, and to be in him that is true*; to come out of darkneſs into his light, out of death into his life; out of Satan's kingdom, and out of ſubjection to ſin, into his kingdom, and into ſubjection to his Spirit. If any man be in Chriſt, he is a new creature; old things are paſſed away, and all things become new. Is this true? Doth he that is in Chriſt witneſs this? And he that doth not witneſs this, is he in Chriſt?

Ah! how many then are deceived about their being in him, and of their hope in him! For how few of thoſe who talk of being in Chriſt know what the new creation in him means, or what it is to have Chriſt formed in them! How few know his Spirit by receiving it, by union with it! which yet if a man have not, he is none of his. How few know how to try ſpirits by the holy anointing, which is only able to try, and diſcover ſuch falſe ſpirits as come in the ſheeps cloathing, and as miniſters of righteouſneſs, and yet come with the deceivableneſs of unrighteouſneſs, to draw men from the Spirit and power, or to keep them in a dead form of knowledge and worſhip, without true life.

So for being under grace, few truly know what it is; for grace is that which hath dominion over ſin, and which giveth dominion to thoſe that are under it. *Sin ſhall not have dominion over you*, ſaid the apoſtle; *for ye are not under the law, but under grace.* Therefore yield not your members ſervants or inſtruments to ſin. Ye did ſo when ye were free from righteouſneſs; but now let not ſin reign in your mortal bodies, ſeeing grace gives you power over it, and makes you free from it unto righteouſneſs.

So juſtification by grace is only to them who are taught by grace. The grace of God brings ſalvation, redemption, juſtification to them, and no others; for their ſins only are blotted out, covered, and not imputed, who receive grace, hear the voice of it, and obey it. *Hear, and your ſouls ſhall live.* In hearing the grace which teacheth from God, ſouls come to live in his ſight; and the living are juſtified by him; and in the living way and path of life are the ſins blotted out, and the garment given which covers the nakedneſs; which garment is to be girt about the ſoul, and kept cloſe on, or the nakedneſs and ſhame will appear, and be ſeen again.

So to believe in the name of Chriſt, and to fly to his name, and truſt in his name, and to pray to the Father in his name, and to obey in his name and power; theſe are great matters, and very few of thoſe that make profeſſion of them truly know them: for his name is living (he was dead, but is alive) and his preſence, heavenly virtue, and power is in it. They that know his name, know that which is above every name. They know that which hath an authority from God to bring all things under (both in the heart, and alſo in the life and converſation) that God alone may be exalted.

The goſpel ſtate is a great ſtate, an high ſtate, a ſtate not of ſhadowy things, but of the everlaſting kingdom, where the ſubſtance of the things under the law is given to, and poſſeſſed by, thoſe that are there, as they grow up in the goſpel power and covenant. There the goſpel faſt is known, the faſt which God hath choſen, which is to looſe the bands of wickedneſs (which bind down the good, even that which is of God in the heart) to take off the heavy burdens, under which, and by which, that which is pure is bowed down, and to let the oppreſſed ſeed go free. This is the faſt which God hath choſen under the goſpel; the pure and undefiled faſt, even to viſit the fatherleſs and widows in their affliction, and to keep one's ſelf unſpotted from the world. And to thoſe that obſerve this faſt God maketh a feaſt of fat things; for their light breaketh forth as the morning, and their health groweth up ſpeedily; and their righteouſneſs goeth before them, and the glory of the Lord gathereth them up, or is their rereward; and the Lord is nigh unto them, and is ready to anſwer them in all that they call upon him for, as was promiſed, *Iſai.* lviii. 8, 9. Now being come to this feaſt, they are to keep it with unleavened bread, as to the fleſh, and as to man's wiſdom; but with the bread which is leavened with the Spirit, leavened with life; and with the wine of the kingdom; which Chriſt eats and drinks with his redeemed-ones, new in the goſpel ſpirit and power, which is his Father's kingdom: for the kingdom of God ſtandeth not in meats or drinks, or any other outward thing, no not in good words concerning the things of the kingdom; but in Spirit, power, and life itſelf, and in the righteouſneſs, peace, and joy, which is in the Spirit.

The Following appears to have been wrote in anſwer to the QUERIES and ANIMADVERSIONS of an Author not named therein. It is ſuppoſed, our Friend ISAAC PENINGTON might have mentioned him in the Title, or pointed him out by ſome ſhort introductory Addreſs, which, thro' Accident, was omitted by the Printer.

Concerning the RULE of the NEW COVENANT, or that which GOD hath appointed to be the Rule to the Children of the New Covenant.

THE way, the truth, the life; the everlaſting way, the everlaſting truth, the everlaſting life; that is the rule in the new covenant. God ſent Chriſt his Son, the Word of eternal life, a light into the world; and the meſſage and drift of the goſpel, is to turn men from the inward darkneſs to the inward light; and being turned to it, the mānifeſtation of this light is to be the rule, which manifeſts the way of light and truth as immediately in the heart, as ever the darkneſs did the way of deceit and error.

The promiſe of the new covenant is, *I will put my Spirit within them*; and this Spirit hath an inward law and teſtimony, which it writeth in the heart; which inward law and teſtimony is to be the rule of the heart. And as the outward Jews were to have recourſe to the outward law and teſtimony, ſo the inward Jews are to have recourſe to the inward law and teſtimony; and to witneſs the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus revealed in them, and their minds and ſpirits ſubjected thereto: and this is near, bright, and powerful in thoſe who receive the Spirit, and with him the law and power of the endleſs life.

The letter killeth: the Jews underſtood not the way of life by the letter; therefore, the promiſe was, *I will pour out my Spirit upon all fleſh:* and becauſe ye are ſons, God hath ſent forth the Spirit of his Son; and thou ſhalt hear a voice behind thee, ſaying, *This is the way, walk in it.* And this voice is to be hearkened to; this prophet (which God raiſeth up to the ſoul in the

new covenant) is to be heard in all things: and he that hears his voice, and obeys, lives; and he that hears not is in death, even until now, profeſs what he will.

In Chriſt Jeſus, neither circumciſion availeth any thing, nor uncircumciſion, but the new creation; if any man walk according to this rule, peace be upon him, *&c.* What doth the apoſtle call the rule here? Oh! wait on the Lord to read in the Spirit, and rightly to underſtand.

If a man receive the Spirit, and walk in the newneſs of the light, and quickenings thereof every day, hath he not a rule which is certain and infallible? If any man be in Chriſt, there is a new creation; and the limits of that new creation (which is the light and power of the endleſs life, or of God's Holy Spirit dwelling within) are his rule. And within the bounds of that (within the bounds of his light, his life, his motions, his inſtructions) man never errs; but out of it, deceit, and darkneſs, and error is always at hand.

Yet (though we do own Chriſt to be the rule) we do not deny making uſe of the ſcriptures to try doctrines and forms of religion by; but know, that what is of God, doth and will agree therewith; and what doth not agree therewith, is not of God; and that our fore-fathers in the faith, were led to batter the ſuperſtitions and idolatries of the Papiſts, by the teſtimony of the ſcriptures. And we have alſo the teſtimony of the ſcriptures with us, both to the light and Spirit within, and againſt forms formerly invented, or now practiſed, out of the life and power. But we believe the Spirit to be a touch-ſtone beyond the ſcriptures, and to be that which giveth ability to try and diſcern, not only words, but ſpirits; whereas a man may hold the form of doctrine and godlineſs, and yet want the power: in which caſe, nothing can try ſuch a ſpirit, but the Spirit of God, which is in the ſpiritual man. And for calling the ſcriptures the Word of God, we cannot but look upon it as an improper expreſſion, They being Many Words, not the One Word; and Chriſt is called in the ſcripture, not only the Word God, but the Word of God. And if, in the fear of the Lord, and true ſenſe, we keep herein to the expreſſions of ſcripture, and its form of words, which are ſound; ſurely we cannot juſtly be blamed for ſo doing.

But whereas ye affirm the ſcripture to be the rule; conſider ſeriouſly, and anſwer me this queſtion. *How is it a rule? Whether it be a rule, as it is literally underſtood?* Or, *Whether it muſt not be interpreted, before it can be underſtood as a rule?* If it muſt be interpreted, *What muſt be the interpreter; whether muſt it be the Spirit of God, or a man's wiſdom?*

As to that queſtion, *Whether the writings of any now be of equal weight with the ſcriptures*; I have this to ſay:

The weight of the words which are from God's Spirit, is according to the ſtrength of life which he pleaſeth to cloathe them with. He ſent forth Moſes, the prophets, the Son in that body of fleſh, the apoſtles, in his name and authority; and the angel that he ſends with the everlaſting goſpel,

pel, after the apoſtaſy, to preach to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, he ſends not without his authority; yea, the meſſage that he thus ſends in any age, hath a peculiar reference to the ſtate of the world, and the ſtate of the people of God in that age; and none can ſlight it (whether it be ſignified by word or writing) without daſhing againſt God's authority, and deſpiſing him that ſpeaketh in theſe latter days. Yea, the immediate word of the Lord, ſpoken and declared at this day, by any man to whom it pleaſeth the Lord to commit the ſame, is of no leſs authority, nor more to be ſlighted now, than it was in his ſervants in the days paſt, by whom the ſcriptures were given forth.

Concerning Chriſt.

CHRIST is that word of eternal life, which was glorified with the Father before the world was; who in the full appointed time took up the body of fleſh, prepared by the Father, to do the will in, and did the will in it, fulfilling all righteouſneſs, to the ſatisfaction of the very heart of the Father; for whoſe name's ſake the ſins of believers are pardoned. And this ſame word of eternal life, and no other, which took that body of fleſh upon him, is alſo manifeſted, and dwelleth in the hearts of his ſaints; who (as they receive him in the faith which is of him) dwells in them richly, manifeſting in the veſſel the treaſures of his divine wiſdom and knowledge. Now, this is the precious knowledge of Chriſt indeed; and this is it every one is to wait for, to find a meaſure of the ſame life, the fullneſs whereof dwells in him bodily, dwelling in our mortal bodies, and making us like unto him, in ſpirit, nature, and converſation. And he that knoweth not, but oppoſeth this (in any of its appearances, or operations), either in himſelf or others, is ſo far of the dark antichriſtian ſpirit.

Concerning the Form of Sound Words.

NOT only the form of ſound words, but alſo the good knowledge of the heavenly things themſelves, have been miſerably loſt, and buried in the ruins of the great apoſtaſy. And though God hath oftentimes touched men's ſpirits, and given them ſome ſenſe of the antichriſtian ſtate of darkneſs; yet have they not had that regard thereunto, ſo as to be led thereby out of the ſtate of darkneſs, but are found in Babylon, by the Spirit of the Lord, at the very time of his coming to deſtroy her. For though the Spirit of the Lord call out of Babylon; yet there is great danger of not obſerving and following the call; but of abiding ſtill there, and partaking of her plagues.

Now, though men have had the ſcriptures, yet wanting the Spirit of God, and not knowing how to turn their minds thereto, and diſtinguiſh his voice from the voice of their own ſpirits and reaſonings (yea, of the enemy alſo,

alſo, who lieth in wait to ſteal into mens minds falſe apprehenſions from the ſcriptures), they have not come into a clear underſtanding, either of the things or words of ſcripture; but with that knowledge, and thoſe apprehenſions of things, which they have gathered, they have many times been ready to fight rather againſt Chriſt than antichriſt; and ſo their confeſſions of faith, and expoſitions of ſcriptures, have been mixed things; rather ſuiting to their own beliefs and apprehenſions, than the true nature of the things themſelves: yea, by this gathered knowledge, they have been in great danger of a deſperate oppoſing the pure adminiſtration of God's truth, from and in the light and power of his own Spirit. Likewiſe the churches they have gathered and built up, they have done in a way of imitation of what was done once formerly by the power, and in the authority, of the Spirit; but not in the ſame power, life, and authority. I might ſay the ſame about their ordinances and duties; wherein the Lord (God knoweth) hath manifeſted to others, and can manifeſt to them, that they have erred very much.

It is true, ye have rejected ſome wood, hay, and ſtubble; and we acknowledge the Lord's goodneſs to you, in that ye have gone ſo far. Yea, but there is yet more to be rejected; and all imitations, and knowledges, and interpretations of ſcripture out of the pure life, are to be laid aſide; and the Spirit of the Lord waited upon, in the light which is of him; to which the mind is to be turned from the darkneſs, and in which it is to abide. Now here ye are very ſhort; not ſo much as come to the outward owning or underſtanding of the way; ſo far are ye from walking therein.

That ye ſeek to find the power and operation of Truth in your hearts, I do believe it concerning divers of you; and do bleſs the Lord in reference to any of you that it is ſo with you; and from my heart deſire for you, that your hearts may be anſwered by the Lord therein, and that ye may feel preſervation through that which is of him in you; though diſtinctly ye know it not, nor how to have your minds turned towards, and to wait upon, the Lord in it.

So to ſeek to have Chriſt formed in you, and to know union with him, and a real implanting into him; to know him as a vine, as head, a living ſtone, a root, as meat indeed, and drink indeed, *&c.* this is precious indeed to deſire, but much more precious to witneſs: and oh! that ye alſo knew the way, the living way, wherein God communicateth theſe things abundantly, to thoſe who once ſat in the deſolate and barren places, mourning and ſorely crying out for the want of them; for then ye would not oppoſe us for turning people from darkneſs to light, but be one with us therein!

The integrity which is in any of you, is of God; and though the ſoul miſtake about a duty or ordinance, yet the cry therein after him is not wholly rejected and deſpiſed by him. But ye would know much more of him, if ye were acquainted with him in his own way, and worſhipped him

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in the everlaſting ordinance, which is the pure light of his Son; which was before the letter, brings the ſoul nearer to the Lord than the letter can, and gives a fuller communion with the Lord in Spirit, than can be had or enjoyed through words or conceptions of things. And the end of the letter's teſtimony is to bring into the Spirit and power, which is the adminiſtration of the goſpel.

Concerning inward Impreſſions.

ALL the impreſſions which are from the holy pure power of the living God, are of the goſpel adminiſtration, and are of great uſe and virtue; and he that is gathered out of the dark power, into the pure power of God, who is light, and who gathers into the light, by the meſſage and miniſtration of the goſpel, in that light hath a diſcerning of the power into which he is gathered, from the power out of which he is gathered. And here he neither can nor dares receive any impreſſion of the dark ſpirit and power (which is known and experienced to work in great ſubtilty and deceiveableneſs) nor refuſe any motion or impreſſion which is of the Pure and Holy One. But ye lay the great ſtreſs upon owning doctrinals according to your apprehenſions of them; whereas ye muſt come much further out of Babylon, out of man's ſpirit and wiſdom, more into the pure fear and waiting upon God, more into the ſenſe and power of truth, and into the light and knowledge which is thereof, before your doctrinals can be owned and ſubſcribed to, by that which is of God. And this ſprings in my heart in true love, and tenderneſs, and melting bowels concerning you: Oh! that ye held the head! I queſtion not, but that ye hold notions about the head, according to your underſtanding of things; but to hold the head is a far deeper thing than ſo.

As for that paſſage about communion with God, apply it; Oh! apply it, or rather wait for the Spirit of the Lord to apply it cloſe to your hearts! For it is poſſible, by his light and Spirit in his own due ſeaſon, he may may make manifeſt to you, that much of that which goeth with you for communion with God, is not really ſo: and, indeed, in the true love and upright tenderneſs of my heart towards you, I would not have you miſtaken about theſe things. As for raptures, the error is eaſy; but in that which lies low in the pure fear is the preſervation. And, friend; I pray conſider this queſtion, which now is in my heart to thee. Thou ſpeakeſt of departing from the faith: Ah! friend, art thou yet come to the faith? Do not anſwer it ſlightly; for I put it not ſlightly to thee, nor without a cauſe. For through the faith of the Son of God, an other-guiſe knowledge and ſenſe of things, in this day of the Lord's power, is received, than thou haſt yet attained.

That a man's doctrinals are right according to ſcripture in all the main ſubſtantials, is no infallible rule to try what power it is that works in him, or

or what his ſpirit is; becauſe deceit works in a myſtery; and the ſpirit of error may come in ſheep's cloathing, and may get good words and fair ſpeeches to deceive the hearts of the ſimple. And there were thoſe that held a form of godlineſs, and had not the true power, but denied it; and ſuch were to be turned from; becauſe, denying the true power, they denied the Lord that bought them, and ſo held not the head; and he that doth ſo, whatſoever he holds of the doctrine of ſcriptures, hath ſufficient cauſe to queſtion his communion with God, and alſo the truth of his raviſhments and ſpiritual enjoyments, and all his duties and graces.

Again; a man may apprehend his doctrinals to be right, as to the main ſubſtantials, when indeed they are not ſo. For the doctrines of the goſpel are myſteries. Faith is a myſtery; the love of and in the Spirit a myſtery; obedience to the truth a myſtery; the right confeſſion of Chriſt in and thro' the Spirit a myſtery; the worſhip of God in Spirit a myſtery; juſtification, ſanctification, and the peace and joy of the Spirit, myſteries of the kingdom, *&c.* and it is eaſy miſſing and miſunderſtanding theſe things, but hard to come to the true knowledge of them; and if any of the true, inward, ſpiritual knowledge of theſe things be received at any time, it is hard retaining it, nay impoſſible rightly ſo to do, but in that which gave it. And indeed this is the great myſtery of religion; to wit, to begin in the Spirit, and ſo to travel on in the pure light, life, and knowledge thereof, and not to entertain or mix with any thing of the fleſh. But now if a man have not the Spirit of Chriſt, or if he be not able to diſtinguiſh the Spirit of Chriſt, in its voice, motions, and workings, from the other Spirit, and from his own wiſdom and underſtanding; when he reads a ſcripture, he may eaſily err and miſtake about the doctrines thereof, and let in ſomewhat of his own, or the other ſpirit's forming, inſtead of that which is the pure truth of God. And then this which he hath ſo let in, will cauſe him to misjudge concerning the truth, when God manifeſts and brings it forth purely and unmixedly in others, and make him a great enemy to it.

This was the caſe of the Scribes and Phariſees and great prieſts, in the time of Chriſt; they ſtudied the law, gave interpretations of it, being appointed by God to preſerve the people's knowledge; and by their underſtanding of the law and prophets, Chriſt could not be the Meſſiah; for, plainly, that appearance of his diſagreed with the law and the prophets, according to their underſtanding of them. Chriſt was to abide for ever; but he ſaid, the Son of man muſt be lifted up. Yea, the very diſciples themſelves underſtood not this for a long time: and if the ſenſe of the life and power of the Father in him, had not bowed down their ſpirits, they alſo would have reaſoned againſt him in many things. *When Chriſt cometh, no man knoweth whence he is: but we know this man whence he is.* And when Nichodemus (who was touched with the ſenſe of his power) ſeemed to favour him; what ſaid they to him? *Search and look, for out of Galilee ariſeth no prophet.* And they themſelves, in ſearching, and looking, and trying

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ing by the ſcriptures, found him not agree with Moſes, and the law which he had given from God (who they ſaid they knew was *of God*): but whereas Moſes had given a ſtrict command about the ſabbath, upon which there was no work to be done, nor burthen borne, *&c.* he, on the other hand, bids a man *take up his bed and walk on the ſabbath day. How could this be the Meſſiah, of whom Moſes wrote* (would they ſay in their hearts)? Would he teach and practiſe contrary to Moſes? So that there is no certain trying by the ſcriptures, further than a man is certain that he hath the underſtanding of thoſe ſcriptures which he trieth by, from God's Spirit. For was not this plain to them, that no burthen was to be borne on the ſabbath? And do they not herein (according to their underſtandings and knowledge of the ſcripture) find Chriſt contrary to Moſes and the prophets? What then would follow naturally? A deceiver! a deceiver, would they preſently cry. He cannot be of God; let him talk of what power he will, it cannot be God's power: we need a further ſign from him, before we can believe him to be the Meſſiah.

But the way of trying doctrines by the unerring Spirit, and pure light of truth in the heart, is certain and infallible. He who is truth, and no lye, never deceives about truth; yea, the very inſtinct of his life and nature diſtinguiſhes things truly, and never teaches the heart to err, who is acquainted with it, and keepeth to it. And what is the Spirit which is given, and why is he given? Is he not above the letter? And where he is received, is he not to be acknowledged above it? Is not his law of light, written by his finger in the heart, above any literal deſcription or command of it? We muſt ſet the Spirit above the ſcriptures, and the miniſtration of the Spirit above the miniſtration of the letter. We cannot be clear before the Lord, in giving way to any profeſſors on the earth herein, but muſt teſtify for God againſt them. Yea, he that hath received the anointing, and knoweth how it teacheth, and how it preſerveth from all that ſeduceth, cannot but give the honour to it, and acknowledge that it is the great ordinance of God in the goſpel, even above and beyond the letter. And till he is ſo known and received, men can never be able to diſtinguiſh the truths of God, as held forth by him in the ſcriptures of truth, from their own conceivings and apprehenſions about things, but will be ready to take their own apprehenſions and conceivings for truth; and having ſo done, they cannot but miſ-ſee, miſtake, and miſjudge about that which is truth indeed. So that the doctrine which they thus ſet up, is not indeed the doctrine of truth according to the ſcriptures, but rather that which they conceive and have imagined ſo to be.

So that, whereas thou ſayeſt, "Your religion conſiſts, firſt, of right apprehenſions, *&c.*" we, on the other hand, cannot but teſtify, as we have been convinced by the Lord, and felt and underſtood in him that is true, that a man muſt firſt receive the Spirit, before he can have right apprehenſions about the myſtery of God, Chriſt, *&c.* becauſe the Spirit ſearcheth the

deep things of God; and the things of God knows no man but by the Spirit: therefore, there is a neceſſity for people firſt to be turned to the Spirit of God, as being the firſt ſtep in the way to true ſaving knowledge.

Concerning the Light.

CHRIST, who had all power given him by the Father, and authority to ſend forth meſſengers to preach the goſpel of his ſalvation, he ſent forth his apoſtles and ſervants to teſtify and declare of it.

That which they were to preach and teſtify of, was, *That which was from the beginning*; even the *eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifeſted unto them.* And this is the meſſage which they heard of him, and were to declare to others, *That God is light, and in him is no darkneſs at all.* And this word of faith, this word which was from the beginning, this word which reconciles the ſoul to God, they were to preach, as near in the heart and in the mouth. And the intent of their preaching and teſtifying of this, was to turn men to it; from the darkneſs within to the light within; from the power of Satan within, to the power of God within. Thus was the goſpel preached before the apoſtaſy, and thus is it again preached after the apoſtaſy; and this light, this life, this power of the inviſible word, is witneſſed again to become the ſalvation, as it was before the apoſtaſy.

Now here, being turned to this, this diſcovers the darkneſs, the loſt eſtate, the captivity, the bands, the miſery of the ſoul, and gives to long after the Saviour; and not only ſo, but it alſo ſheweth the Saviour whom it cauſeth the ſoul to long after; and in the waiting upon the Saviour in the light which is of him, giveth to partake of his ſalvation.

And ſo here we come to have that work of God renewed in our hearts and ſpirits, which at any time was formerly wrought; and wrought more clearly and effectually; as it muſt needs be, as the mind is turned toward and gathered into the pure light, life, and power. And in this we are taught to own Chriſt, as he appeared in that body of fleſh, and what he did in the life and virtue of the Father; yea, the preciouſneſs of that his ſacrifice, both in its own nature, and in the eye of the Father; and we bleſs the Lord for him, and believe in the Father through him. Yea, we bleſs the Lord for the declarations of the good things in the ſcriptures, and read them with joy and thankfulneſs to the Father, and in the watch againſt that which would imagine about them; for we know any ſuch thing (let into the mind) darkens. So that we do not fall ſhort in a true owning of Chriſt, as he appeared in that body; and alſo we know and own the ſame word of eternal life appearing in us; ſo that we can ſay truly with the apoſtle, *it hath pleaſed the Father to reveal the Son in us, and it is the eternal life, it is the Son indeed of the Holy God, and not another.*

Now, for that way of working which thou ſpeakeſt of, of ſeeing a man's nakedneſs, filthineſs, wretched, loſt, undone condition; of being convinced

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of his own impotency; that his help is not in himſelf; that all his righteouſneſs is as filthy rags; of crying out, what ſhall I do! Woe is me, I am undone! What ſhall I do to be ſaved? How ſhall I appear before the Lord? And ſo of mourning in ſecret, and the ſore running, *&c.* and the diſcovery of Chriſt, as was in that day, as offered without money, without price, *&c.* and ſo the ſoul's humble and cordial caſting itſelf upon him, *&c.* and deſiring to know him, not only as a Saviour, but as a Lord alſo, reigning over it, *&c.* All this we knew, in the true and ſenſible experience, as it was revealed in that day. But we knew not the word of life within to be the word (though we felt operations from it); and ſo were not founded upon the rock, upon the word of life, as revealed within; and ſo when the ſtorms came, they had greater power upon our ſpirits than we believed they could poſſibly have. And now in the Lord's freſh viſiting of us, we have not loſt any thing we had before, nor do deny any thing that God wrought in us then; but have it again with advantage, and precious additions, from the Lord God, in that pure light of life wherewith he hath viſited us.

And now God having demonſtrated this thing to us, ſhewing us what it is, and giving us to partake of the precious virtues of it; how can we call it leſs than a meaſure of Chriſt, of his Spirit; than the ſeed of the kingdom; than the heavenly leaven, *&c.?* knowing and experiencing it aſſuredly to be that very thing which Chriſt ſo called in his parables; and that in you which is offended at us for it, we know to be not the true birth, but the birth of another wiſdom, which is to be caſt out with its mother: and it will be a happy day with you, if ever ye come to witneſs the caſting of it out; which ye can never do, till ye come to know, and own, and be ſubject to, Chriſt within, to the pure commandment and Word of life in the heart, to the law which cometh out of Sion, and to the teſtimony and word of the Lord from Jeruſalem. And they that come not to know it caſt out of them by the power, they thereby will be caſt out with it.

But that there are ſome glimmerings of light remaining in fallen man, directing concerning many things morally good, as to honour parents, to deal juſtly, to do as we would be done unto, *&c.* there is, thou ſayeſt, a light diſcovering theſe things as duties, and the contrary to be evil, and there is alſo ſome anſwerable ſtrength to come up to ſuch moralities. If thou meaneſt a light diſtinct from the Spirit and divine nature of God, I deſire thee to manifeſt it from ſcripture: for Adam was to die the death that very day that he ſinned. And the death and curſe came upon his poſterity, who are dead in treſpaſſes and ſins; but the light that diſcovers and leads out of evil is from Chriſt. That which maketh ſin manifeſt, is his light. I read that the grace which bringeth ſalvation, hath appeared to all men; and that that teaches men to deny ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, and gives them ſtrength ſo to do; and that it is the work of the Spirit to convince of ſin; and that the Spirit of the Lord ſtrived with the old world to reduce them from their evil ways; and that he gave the Jews his good

Spirit to inſtruct them, but they rebelled againſt him: but that there are ſome glimmerings of light diſtinct from the Spirit of Chriſt, teaching fallen man to do this, and ſome anſwerable ſtrength in him to walk up thereto, I read not.

It is the promiſe of the new covenant, that God will write his laws in the heart; and whatever of his law is written in any man's heart, it is by virtue thereof; for man is dead unto God's law naturally, and his eye blinded by the God of the world; but that which opens his eye to ſee what the law ſaith, is the light of the Spirit. For that which maketh manifeſt is light; and that which may be known of God in the Gentiles, is made manifeſt to them by the light of God in them; which ſhineth in their darkneſs, but their darkneſs cannot comprehend it; but it fathometh and comprehendeth the darkneſs, and is able to gather the mind out of it, being ſubjected to it, in the will which it creates and begets, through the eternal power which viſits by it, and is preſent with it, to work the mind out of, and deliver it from, the darkneſs. And as this light comes from Chriſt *(for he is the true light, that enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world)* ſo it diſcovers and maketh manifeſt Chriſt, in his nature and Spirit, and leadeth and guideth towards him; and he that is led to him in Spirit, and born of him in Spirit, cannot miſs of the benefit and virtue of what he did in that body of fleſh; being gathered into, and found in, that which is of him, to which all belongs. And in and by this is received that nature wherein the law is anſwered; and the work of anſwering the law, is through the renewing of the mind, and an evidence of ſomewhat of a new nature; every degree of which nature is begotten and maintained by Chriſt, the power of God; who is over the fall, and the whole corruption thereof. But by the old corrupt nature or mind, can no man do the things contained in the law; for it is enmity againſt God, and is not ſubject to his holy law; neither indeed can be. But the law is ſpiritual, holy, juſt, and good, converting the ſoul, and making wiſe the ſimple; which work it effecteth, where-ever it is written in the heart, by the finger of God's Spirit.

Then again, as touching God's imputing Chriſt's active and paſſive obedience, *&c.* we do not lay the ſtreſs of juſtification in believing a notion, concerning Chriſt's active and paſſive obedience; but this we know, that Chriſt did obey and ſuffer, and that it was for our ſakes; and that, for his ſake, there is a gift given us from the Father, to draw us to Chriſt; and that he that is overcome to God, by the gift of his light, is thereby drawn out of the darkneſs; and that that gift brings every man (that hears the heavenly voice thereof, and follows it) into the Son's light, into the Son's nature, into the Son's life, into the Son's Spirit; in which, the Gentiles might partake of remiſſion of ſins for his ſake, being gathered thereby out of the darkneſs, into his light and power. For though they had never heard the outward ſound or name Chriſt; yet feeling the thing, and being gathered to God by the thing, the value and virtue of it could not but redound

dound to them: for it is not the outward name, but the inward life and power, which is the Saviour.

And whereas the voice of the Spirit ſaith, *Ho, every one that thirſteth, come ye to the waters*; what are the waters to which the thirſty are invited to come? Did we not believe in Chriſt, and caſt ourſelves on Chriſt in that day, according as thou apprehendeſt? And yet the thirſt and cry of our ſouls was not ſatisfied. But the living waters ſatisfy the thirſt. Nor is it a believing a relation concerning the thing; but a receiving of the thing, of the milk, of the wine, of the living water, which anſwers the deſire of the thirſty ſoul. And by coming to the living waters, and hearing the living voice, and eating and drinking the living food, the ſoul lives, and the everlaſting covenant is made with it, even the ſure mercies of David, which are ſure in the covenant of life for ever. And thoſe that are living, in and by the true life, cannot deſire to reap or enjoy any thing out of the new covenant of life, but only in it.

This is in my heart concerning you: Ye lay the ſtreſs upon a notion, and upon an act of the creature from and upon a notion; which they that are out of the life may perform; and who (that hath any ſenſe of a man in him) would not perform, to avoid periſhing? That is, who would not thus caſt himſelf upon Chriſt, if believing after ſuch a manner would ſave him? And yet there is alſo a difference, a very great difference, between doing of it now, when Chriſt is generally owned as the Saviour, and doing it then, when he was generally diſowned. In them who thus believed, it argued the teachings of the life and power ſo to do; but now the form of owning Chriſt is far more common than any form or way of diſowning him. So that now, not the word, nor the form, nor the outward owning, or the caſting of the ſoul upon Chriſt, is ſo much to be conſidered or valued; but rather the power, the light, the life, the gift, wherein and whereby this is alone rightly and truly done. And he that owneth Chriſt aright, will own that which is of Chriſt, the manifeſtation and gift of his Spirit, the ſhining of his pure light, firſt in the darkneſs, and then out of the darkneſs, to that mind which it hath gathered and preſerveth out of the darkneſs.

And then for being compleat in Chriſt in a relative way, while the heart is unmortified, and unſubdued to God; it is a dangerous miſtaking about theſe things. I do confeſs that ſins are pardoned upon a true belief, and the ſoul enters into the covenant of life, and is accepted with the Lord, as it finds entrance thereinto, and walks therein. And there is no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt, *who walk not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit*. But if there be an hearkening to the fleſh, and walking after the luſts and deſires thereof, is there no condemnation then? Is not the juſtification in the covenant, and according to the laws of the covenant? Alas! alas! how do men imagine concerning things! and ſo in their imaginations juſtify themſelves wherein the Lord condemns them; and know not the way of the covenant, and of the juſtification thereof. For there is a new covenant,

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as well as as an old (and the new is not like the old); and a walking with God in the new covenant; and every ſtep in it his life juſtifies, and every ſtep out of it his life condemns; and the Mediator of the new covenant juſtifies it according to the new covenant, and never otherwiſe. For the way of God is perfect (the way of life, the way of reconciliation, the way of redemption); and the ſoul is only accepted and juſtified of the Lord therein. Yea, juſtification is a myſtery to man's wiſdom and underſtanding, with all his knowledge he can gather from ſcripture: and he only knows it who feels it, and hath the experience of it, in that which is true, and which cannot deceive.

Concerning Juſtification.

THE apoſtle James ſaith expreſly, That by works a man is juſtified, and not by faith only; and his words were from God's Spirit, and are true, and the Lord ſaw an uſe and ſervice of them. There are works which are excluded the covenant of life, and there are works which are not excluded, no not to juſtification. There are works required by the covenant; works wrought in the faith and by the power of God; and when they are brought to the light, it is made manifeſt that they were wrought in God; even works that are of his Son, wrought in the life and by the Spirit of his Son, and theſe the Father always juſtifieth. Yet we do not ſay this is a man's juſtification for his ſins paſt, but they are forgiven for his name's ſake: nor do they expiate ſins afterward committed, *&c.* but the advocate intercedes, and his blood waſhes them away. But this we ſay, that alone in the faith, in the obedience of the new covenant, the juſtification of the new covenant is witneſſed: and the new covenant juſtifieth no ſin, nor the ſoul in ſin; but purgeth away the ſin, and juſtifieth from it, waſhing off the venom and defilement of the wicked ſpirit from the conſcience, which the Lord purgeth by the faith, and by the virtue of the water and blood which the faith brings in.

Now having been led by God into the pure covenant of life, and having there had the true ſenſe, knowledge, and experience of things, even of the truth as it is in Jeſus, we cannot but ſpeak and teſtify of it as we have felt and received it; and here we know and find certainly and infallibly, that it is not the law of works which juſtifieth the believer, nor the obedience or righteouſneſs thereof; but there is a righteouſneſs revealed, of an higher nature and kind than the righteouſneſs of that law, which is made the ſoul's in and by the faith. And this is Chriſt's righteouſneſs, the righteouſneſs of his life, the righteouſneſs of his nature, the righteouſneſs of his Spirit, which is revealed in the ſoul, and which, in the union with Chriſt, becomes the ſoul's, and Chriſt thereby is made of God unto us righteouſneſs. And the works which are wrought in man by this righteous Spirit and holy power, are of far more value in themſelves, and of more acceptation with God, than man's obedience to the law could be, could he obey ever

ever ſo exactly; for theſe are from an higher principle, and of a far more excellent nature, ſpirit and kind, than man's nature and ſpirit is; and yet the acceptance is not for the works' ſake, but for the ſake of the worker of theſe works.

Concerning God's Love to Mankind

GREAT is the love of God to mankind, who deſireth not their deſtruction, but their redemption and ſalvation from that which deſtroyeth. Now from and according to this love, he ſent Chriſt as a ranſom, a propitiation for the ſins of the whole world: and not only ſo, but he hath given him as a light to enlighten all the dark parts of the earth, that every ſoul might believe in his light, and by its guidance and power come out of the darkneſs: and the free-gift is as large and as powerful to ſave, as the offence or offences are to deſtroy. So that God hath not only ſaid it, but he hath manifeſted that he deſireth not the death of a ſinner, but would have all men to be ſaved, and come to the knowledge of his truth, and gift of his grace, that they might be ſaved thereby. And this is the goſpel, even the grace which bringeth ſalvation, and the power of eternal life, to all mens doors; by and in which the Spirit of the Lord God (who is able to ſave) ſtrives with them and in them (according to his pleaſure) againſt the enemy.

Now for men to interpret a ſcripture ſo as to overturn this, contrary to the very drift of the goſpel, and contrary to the very nature and heart of God, they do not well, nor by the guidance of his Spirit in ſo doing. And now in love to thee, though I have not much freedom to open theſe things, knowing that they are above the ſtate of moſt people to underſtand, and that it is rather proper for them to wait in what is clear and manifeſt, than to meddle with things hard to be underſtood, and deeply myſterious, before the Spirit of the Lord opens them to them: yet I ſay, in love I find freedom in the Lord to ſay a little to thee. Mind the words of the apoſtle, in fear and reverence towards the Lord: *What if God, willing to ſhew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-ſuffering the veſſels of his wrath fitted to deſtruction?*

Now conſider, how is *God willing to ſhew his wrath, and to make the power of his deſtroying a veſſel* known? Is it a thing natural to him? Is it not contrary to his nature to deſtroy? Any who can teſtify any thing of the life of God in their hearts, do they find any thing of a deſtroying nature in it? Chriſt, who was the expreſs image of God, did not he come to ſave? Did he come to deſtroy any? And when any reſiſted the counſel of God againſt themſelves, was it not grievous to him? *O Jeruſalem! Jeruſalem! how often would I have gathered thee!* Here the heart of God towards the ſons of men may be read, as in a true glaſs. And before the Lord gives them up to deſtruction, doth he not endure them with much long-ſuffering? And is it not

not the proper intent of the goodneſs, forbearance, and long-ſuffering of God to lead men to repentance? *Rom.* ii. 4. And they that are led by the long-ſuffering to repent, do they not witneſs it ſalvation? 2 *Pet.* iii. 15. Ah! wait on God, that thou mayeſt underſtand theſe things from him as they are; and not according to the imaginations and reaſonings of thine own wiſdom and underſtanding. It hath been a long night of darkneſs, wherein many miſapprehenſions and falſe conceivings upon ſcriptures have been ſwallowed down, which the Lord pitied us under, and bare with us in them; but now it is high time to bow down to and receive that light which purgeth the veſſel from all ſuch miſapprehenſions and miſconceivings, which are as really hay and ſtubble in the ſight of God, as the groſſeſt darkneſs of popery is.

Concerning Baptiſm.

WE own the one baptiſm; and, bleſſed be the Lord, are baptized therewith into one body. That of water was but the forerunner's, but the ſhadow of Chriſt's baptiſm, which is with the Holy Spirit and fire. Now when Chriſt ſent his apoſtles to preach and baptize, did he ſend them to baptize with the forerunner's baptiſm, or with his own baptiſm, when he ſaid, *Go teach all nations, baptizing them into the name*, &c.? Paul profeſſeth openly he was not ſent to baptize, but to preach the goſpel. Was he not an apoſtle? Had he not ſeen the Lord? Had he not his commiſſion from him? Did not the apoſtolick commiſſion contain baptiſm as fully as preaching? Is it not ſaid, *He that believeth, and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved?* Yes, without doubt, it did contain Chriſt's baptiſm (without which there is no ſalvation) as well as preaching; but the baptiſm of water, which was a figure of the thing (which Paul did find freedom to do to ſome) Paul ſaid he was not ſent to do. He did it not by commandment, but he might do it by permiſſion, as well as circumciſe; which was another figure of the ſame thing.

Concerning Perfection.

CHRIST is a perfect phyſician, and is able to work a perfect cure on the heart that believeth in him, and waiteth upon him: yea, he came to deſtroy the works of the devil, to cleanſe man's mind of the darkneſs and power of Satan, and to fill it with the life and power of truth; and he ſent forth a miniſtry not only for the beginning, but for the perfecting of the work: yea, his Word in the mouth and heart is powerful, ſharper than a two-edged ſword, and he can caſt out the ſtrong man, and cut down all that is corrupt and contrary to himſelf, and break down every ſtrong-hold in the mind, and ſpoil all the goods of the enemy. Chriſt likewiſe bids his diſciples *be perfect, as their heavenly Father is perfect*; and the apoſtle bids men

men *perfect holineſs in the fear of God*, that they might be fully ſeparated from, and not ſo much as touch, the unclean thing; but enjoy the promiſes of God's dwelling in them, and walking in them, whoſe temple under the goſpel is to be pure. And if a man wait upon God in the work of purifying, and witneſs the power and virtue of the new covenant, even the fear put into the heart, which keepeth the heart clean, and will not ſuffer it to depart from the Lord, and witneſs the powerful law of the endleſs life giving him dominion over the law of ſin and death in the members, and the Spirit of the Lord put within him, cauſing him to walk in his ways, and to keep his ſtatutes and do them; ſurely this man cometh near to perfection. Did Chriſt cure perfectly outwardly in the days of his fleſh; and ſhall he not cure perfectly inwardly, in the day of his Spirit? Yes, certainly; the lame, the deaf, the blind, the dumb, the lepers, waiting upon him in the way of his covenant, ſhall be cured by him as perfectly inwardly, as ever the others were outwardly. And then is the day of joy, and of reaping the good things which the promiſes contain, feeding on the feaſt of fat things on God's holy mountain, in peace of ſpirit, in ſecurity from the ſoul's enemies, none of them being able to come near to hurt or deſtroy; nay, not ſo much as to make afraid on the mountain of God's holineſs: and then the ſong of Moſes, and the ſong of the Lamb is ſung, and walking in the way of holineſs witneſſed; which no unclean thing can paſs over to, but only the ranſomed and redeemed of the Lord.

Now if any man come in truth to witneſs this from the Lord, and hath found by his conſuming fire the droſs burnt up in him, and his ſoul cleanſed from what is corrupt and unrighteous; doth he deceive himſelf, or is he a liar, if he ſay the Lord hath cleanſed me from all my unrighteouſneſs? And did John ſpeak there of his own ſtate, or of the ſtate of the other apoſtles and believers, who were grown up in the life and power of truth, and had overcome the wicked-one, by the ſtrength of Chriſt in them? Or did he ſpeak condeſcendingly (as the apoſtles often did with the weak: becoming as weak, when they were exalted by God to an higher ſtate than that condition ſignified)? Had he not fellowſhip with the Father and the Son? And was not his joy full? And is the joy of any full, while ſin, while corruption, is near and hath power; while Satan, while the powers of darkneſs, are not trodden under foot? There is a ſtate of righteouſneſs without Chriſt, wherein if a man ſay he hath no ſin (and ſo thinks he hath no need of Chriſt) he deceives himſelf. But there is a power in Chriſt to perfect the work of redemption in the heart; to ſanctify the creature wholly, in body, ſoul, and ſpirit; yea, his leaven received will work, and works daily, till it hath wrought all out, and the whole be leavened; and he that truly feeleth it ſo, and can ſay in God's preſence, and in the true fear and humility of heart, The old leaven is wholly wrought out, and the new hath wholly leavened me; this is not the voice of deceit, but of truth, in him.

As for that queſtion, Whether Chriſt hath not reigned in his Spirit all along in the ſouls of his true people?

Anſw. There hath been little of Chriſt's reign in Spirit witneſſed all along the apoſtaſy. It is a great matter to come to witneſs Chriſt's reign in the heart: yea, there are many who never yet came through the ſuffering which goes before the reign: but the croſs, the power of the croſs, and the thorough death thereby of all that ſtands in the way of Chriſt's pure reigning, is yet to be taken up, and many journeys to be gone, before men come to witneſs Chriſt's kingdom, and the reign of his Spirit therein?

There are ſome other paſſages which I find in my heart to ſay ſomewhat to. One is this: "That ye know through mercy when ye are well; that "ye are ſatisfied, *&c.*"

There hath been a cloudy and a dark day; which, for its thickneſs, may well be called night; wherein the people of the Lord have been ſcattered from mountain to hill, ſeeking their reſting-place.

Now it hath pleaſed the Lord, after this thick night of darkneſs to gather the ſcattered ſheep, and to become the phyſician (in the miniſtration of his Spirit, life, and power) to heal them, and bind them up.

And thoſe that have been ſick and diſtreſſed, and brought into the true ſenſe, they feel the need of the phyſician, and bleſs his name for the healing which he bringeth with him under his wings.

But there are ſome that are fat and ſtrong, and whole and compleat by an imputed righteouſneſs, according to their own apprehending; and theſe are well; theſe are ſatisfied; they have no need of this viſitation of God, nor of this diſpenſation of life and power from on high.

There was a church once, before the apoſtaſy took place, that knew the truth better than ye do, that ſaid, She was rich, increaſed with goods, and had need of nothing; and yet wanted the tried gold, the white raiment, and the eye-ſalve. And if ye knew how aright to wait on the Lord, and receive counſel and light from him, perhaps ye might therein ſee alſo, that ye are deſtitute of and want the ſame things.

Now in that we teſtify to you that we have been in your ſtate, and fully experienced it, and ſeen in the light of the Lord the truth thereof, and the defects thereof; and in love, and in the leadings of God's Spirit, are drawn to teſtify thereof to you, and have from him received the knowledge of the living way, which was made manifeſt before the apoſtaſy, and is now again; and are taught and enabled by the Lord to walk with him therein, the Lord having led us into that, and brought us forth in that, from which all the apoſtates have erred, and out of which they all are; this ſhould not be a thing ſlighted by you; but being a weighty teſtimony, and of great concernment to you, ſhould be weightily conſidered of, and determined in you, by that which alone is able to decide it. Now if ye weigh this teſtimony by ſcriptures, and have not a true underſtanding of theſe ſcriptures from God, ye will but thereby err the more, and be the more confident and hardened

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in your errors, and ſo go on in a kind of ſatisfaction and peace in kicking againſt the pricks.

And as for our confidence, we can truly ſay in the Spirit of truth, We know that we are of God, gathered unto him by the life and Spirit of his Son revealed in us; and we could eat our bread in ſecret, and drink the water of life out of our own ciſterns ſilently, but that the Lord required us, and his love conſtraineth us, and it is due to the glorious work of his mercy and power towards us, to declare, in the ſeaſons of his chuſing, what the Lord hath done for our poor, diſtreſſed, mourning, wandering, undone ſouls. Now if others are confident without a cauſe; that doth not make void our confidence, which is grounded upon the truth; nor the teſtimony thereof, iſſuing forth from and in the truth: but that which is of God heareth and owneth it, and feeleth the work of his love and great power, and bleſſeth his name therefore.

As for thoſe expreſſions, "It is enough for thee that Jeſus Chriſt is thine, "*&c.*" ſo far as thou feeleſt union with him, in the principle of life which is of him, thou mayeſt ſay ſo truly. But is it not ſtrange, that thou ſhouldſt be of it, and not be able to know and own it, in this day of its manifeſtation; but call the light, which is ſpiritual and eternal (and gives the true and certain knowledge of Chriſt), natural? What! of God, of Chriſt (having received the Spirit, the living well) and yet not know the myſtery of life within, nor its pure voice in this preſent day! but limit the unlimited One to a form of words formerly ſpoken by him! how do theſe things agree with what thou profeſſeſt? Surely they are deeply in the miſt, who know not Chriſt from antichriſt; but fight againſt Chriſt and his light, as if it were of antichriſt or nature. Now we are one with any of you (though ye know it not) ſo far as ye know and are of the truth, and feel true union with whatever is of God in you.

Thus in faithfulneſs to God, and in love to truth and tenderneſs to thee, I have given forth that which ſprang in me towards thee. And indeed I ſingly breathe to the Lord in my ſpirit, that it may be ſerviceable in the hands of the Lord for thy good; even to ſhake that knowledge and ſenſe which is not of him in thee (though thou ſtrongly believeſt it to be of him), and ſo to bring thee to the infallible ſenſe and experience of the true foundation, and to a fixed building and eſtabliſhment in Spirit thereupon, in that light which is of the Father; that therein thou mayeſt own and partake of the miniſtration of the everlaſting and pure power in thy preſent day and generation; which is now ſo diſpenſed, as it hath not been ſince the night of the apoſtaſy. Bleſſed be his name, whoſe light ſhines, whoſe life is made manifeſt, whoſe power is riſen out of, and reigns over, the darkneſs; whoſe love and mercy abounds in the hearts of the redeemed-ones, who abundantly partake of the covenant of life, and of the precious promiſes of the goſpel, to the praiſe of the riches of the grace and mercy which were to be revealed in the ages to come after the apoſtaſy, and are ſo revealed, and are

yet more to be revealed, to the increaſe of the glory of his name, and of the joy and conſolation of his redeemed-ones; who find that to be God's power and wiſdom, and mighty redemption to them, which to others is a ſtumbling-block, weakneſs, and fooliſhneſs: and he who ever was, and ſtill is, the life, is once again become a ſtumbling-ſtone, and rock of offence to both the houſes of Iſrael; who though they have longed after him, and breathed for him, and prayed that his kingdom might come; yet now, when he is come, they know him not, but are wiſe and ſtrong in reſiſting and oppoſing him; which is much to their hurt and great danger, as the Lord God ſeeth in the light wherein he dwells, and as he hath given his children, who dwell with him in the ſame light, to ſee with his eye. And friend; take heed that thou turn not the edge of thy weapon, even of thy ſcripture-knowledge, againſt Chriſt (there were thoſe that once did ſo); nor that thy table become thy ſnare: for that was the curſe which lighted on thoſe who oppoſed Chriſt's appearance in fleſh; and it may alſo (in the juſt and moſt righteous judgment of God) befall thoſe who oppoſe his appearance in ſpirit in this his day.

And as for what I have written unto thee, thou ſhalt one day witneſs that I have written to thee in true love, and in the true light and ſenſe of truth: and if thou canſt retire into that which is of God in thee, and receive the true ſenſe and underſtanding there, thou wilt there feel it ſo now. And oh! that thou couldſt diſtinguiſh between God's witneſs in thy heart, and the voice of thy underſtanding and gathered knowledge! that thou mighteſt receive a being, life, pure ſenſe, and underſtanding, in that which is pure of God; that the gold might be ſeparated from the droſs, and there might come forth a veſſel for the refiner!

25th of the 11th month, 1667.

I am a lover of ſouls, and an earneſt deſirer after their welfare; but eſpecially of ſuch as breathe after, and long for, communion with the Lord, in that which is living and pure,

ISAAC PENINGTON.

A BRIEF

A

REPLY to thy ANIMADVERSIONS.

To the Firſt.

A Man is juſtified upon account of Chriſt, of being in him, believing in him, obeying his goſpel. All theſe have reference to juſtification, according to the ſoul's experience, and according to the ſcriptures, and none of them are to be excluded. God hath appointed Chriſt to be a prince and a Saviour, to give repentance, faith, and remiſſion of ſins; and in the exerciſe of that repentance and faith, the righteouſneſs and juſtification is received. And the Lord condemns the unbeliever, becauſe he believes not; and the diſobedient, becauſe he obeys not the goſpel: and he alſo juſtifies the believer and the obedient, becauſe of the faith and obedience of his Son which he finds in them. And in this faith, the righteouſneſs, the pure righteouſneſs, flows; the Spirit of the Lord covers; and it is not only the principle, but alſo the garment, of righteouſneſs and ſalvation; yea, all that Chriſt did in the fleſh comes in here, and the ſoul feels and partakes of the virtue and value of it all, being found here. But out of this are the notions and imaginations of mens minds, upon and about ſcriptures concerning the thing; who indeed and in truth (as it really is) know it not.

To the Second.

There are two covenants, and there are works of each, works required by each. In the old covenant, obedience to the law of Moſes is required. In the new covenant, believing in Chriſt *(this is the work of God, that ye believe in him whom he hath ſent)* and obedience to his goſpel and Holy Spirit. Now theſe, and the works of the old, are not one and the ſame, nor have the ſame acceptance and juſtification with the Lord. Nay, though a man could perform all the law of Moſes exactly, yet would he not be therein ſo juſtified in the ſight of God as the believer is; his faith and obedience, which he receiveth from Chriſt, and performeth in the ſtrength of his grace and new life, being of an higher kind, and more excellent nature, than man's fulfilling the law in his own natural capacity and principle can be. I am ſorry thou haſt no better a knowledge and ſavour of the things of the kingdom, than to teſtify a diſlike of this diſtinction. And as for the Papiſts, we meddle not with them, farther than we are led by the Lord: for my part, I know not what they hold as to this thing.

To

To the Third.

God did threaten the Gentiles (wiſhing them to take heed of boaſting againſt the Jews) that if they did not continue in the faith, and in the fear, they ſhould be cut off, as the Jews were. Now there was a great and general departing from the faith, and anſwerably a general cutting off. And though life was reſerved in a ſelect number in the wilderneſs; yet the true way of gathering into churches and the church-ſtate fell. And now being fallen, the Lord alone is able to rebuild, as he built at firſt. Now men reading the ſcriptures of the glory of the former church-ſtate, have been longing after it (which was good), but withal too forward to thruſt themſelves into it, and build by imitation, without the clear ſight, leadings, and guidance of the Spirit; and ſo have not built up in the ſame life and power by which the building was at firſt, and can alone be truly raiſed again. Now the Lord being come forth in his power, and raiſing up his own building, the ſame Spirit that raiſeth up that, teſtifieth againſt all the other, which are raiſed up without it. And indeed the teſtimony againſt the preſent churches and congregations gathered out of the power, is God's, not ours. But conſider ſeriouſly; John had a reed given him to meaſure the temple, *&c.* when part was to be reſerved for God, and part to be given to the Gentiles. But who gave you power to gather churches, or practiſe thoſe which ye call church-ordinances? *Who hath required theſe things at your hands?* And where doſt thou read, that the Gentiles did tread down the outward court after it was given them? They trod down the holy city indeed forty-two months.

To the Fourth.

So far as you ſee, hear, taſte, feel any thing in the pure light of the truth, as it is in Jeſus, we rejoice therein; and heartily deſire the increaſe thereof in you: but we would not have you miſtaken about theſe things.

To the Fifth.

Concerning the word or commandment which Moſes ſpeaks of, and which Paul ſaid was the word of faith which they preached.

If the firſt covenant had been faultleſs, there had not been place left for a ſecond. *For if there had been a law given, which would have given life, righteouſneſs ſhould have been by that law.* But notwithſtanding the wonders which God did in Egypt and the wilderneſs, and the giving the law and ordinances, *&c.* yet the veil was upon them, and *the Lord had not given them an heart to perceive, nor eyes to ſee, nor ears to hear, to that very day,* Deut. xxix. 4. Well then; there was a neceſſity of a another covenant; and theſe words which Moſes now ſpeaks to them from God, were words concerning another covenant beſides that made in Horeb.

But

But where is the commandment of this covenant? Where is the law of this covenant? Where is the Word of this covenant? It is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou ſhouldſt ſay, Who ſhall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither is it beyond the ſea; *but the Word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayeſt do it.* And this nigh Word of the other covenant, whereby God circumciſeth the heart, to love the Lord God with all the heart, is the Word eternal, and no other; who hath received this power of the Father, and none elſe hath received it: and in the obedience to him, his righteouſneſs is revealed and received, and made the ſoul's, from faith to faith. And it is in vain for you to think to blind our eyes either concerning this ſcripture, or concerning the thing itſelf which this ſcripture teſtifies of; God having opened the eye and heart, which ſees and knows, and which in the true light, which is from and of the Word, ſees him who is inviſible and eternal, even the life, holy power, wiſdom, and righteouſneſs, which was in and with the Father before the world was. And this was the Word, before it took up the body of fleſh, and is ſtill the Word, and no other; and its commandment is life eternal; in the pure faith whereof, and in the pure obedience whereto, he giveth life abundantly: but out of the faith and obedience thereto, he doth neither give life, nor the juſtification of life; but the deceits of the enemy there prevail in mens minds concerning theſe things.

Now had the Jews under the law come to this Word, they had by the light thereof underſtood the law, and by the power thereof fulfilled it. And when Chriſt and the apoſtles preached, had they that heard, felt this Word, they could not but in their hearts have believed him to be the Lord, and alſo have confeſſed his reſurrection from the dead; which, in that day, it was a great thing to confeſs, being not revealed by fleſh and blood; nor the teſtimony then eaſily ſwallowed by the fleſhly and earthly part, but generally oppoſed by it. But now theſe things are received and acknowledged by multitudes without the power; and as ſo received, are of no value, nor can ſave; but the owning and receiving, and being born of the Spirit, life, and power (which was in him) ſaves, and gives ſuch an acknowledgment of theſe things, as is of the life and power, and accepted with the Father.

But, alas! friend, how haſt thou wreſted and perverted this ſcripture, turning aſide the intent of God's Spirit, and putting thine own meaning upon his words, ſtriving to make them ſpeak what thou wouldſt have them! Is this reading of the ſcriptures in reverence, humility, and godly fear? Oh! that God would give thee a ſenſe of what thou haſt done herein! For neither Moſes nor Paul doth thus reſtrain them, nor mention any ſuch ſort of people as thou ſpeakeſt of; but thou, by thy expoſition, makeſt void the mind of God, and the drift of his Spirit in the ſcriptures. If thou haſt, in this wiſdom and latitude of thy own ſpirit, read the ſcriptures, not knowing

ing God's Spirit to gird and limit thee from thine own apprehendings and conceivings, what kind of rule haſt thou made to thyſelf out of them? Ah! friend, if thou knoweſt God's Spirit, keep to it; if thou knoweſt it not, wait for it to become thy guide and leader, and the opener of ſcriptures and the myſteries of the kingdom to thee.

The light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world, and the eternal Word or Son of God, is the ſame. And this light ſhining in the darkneſs, ſhineth and enlighteneth with the true light: And the end of its enlightening is, that therein men might feel the drawings of the Father, the ſtrivings of his Spirit; and in the faith thereof, and ſubjection thereto, come out of the darkneſs.

Now the condemnation is not becauſe Chriſt hath not ſufficiently enlightened them, or that there goeth not ſufficient power with his light to redeem from the darkneſs; but becauſe men turn the deaf ear to him, will not hear him; but, in love to the darkneſs, hear the voice of him who dwells in the darkneſs. But the Spirit of Chriſt, who is in the light, and dwells in the light, who ſtrives with the dark world by his light, is able to conquer and overcome the darkneſs. Yea, the Word of life, nigh in the mouth and heart, is able to overcome the power of death there, to quicken, to gather to God, to ſet the captive free, *&c.* And the reaſon why men periſh, is not through God's inſufficient viſiting of them, but becauſe of their turning from the meaſure of the manifeſtation of his Spirit. They deſpiſe the day of ſmall things; they will not come to that wherein the life and virtue was hid, and ſo loſe the day of their viſitation, and miſs of the good which God intended to them thereby.

And whereas thou ſayeſt, "The light doth not, nor cannot, diſcover "Chriſt, and his being raiſed from the dead, *&c.*" I cannot but ſay, on the other hand, what doth diſcover them, but the light? How came the ſcriptures to declare of Chriſt? Was it not from the Spirit? And is not that ſame light ſtill with the Spirit, by which the ſcriptures were given forth? And can he not give it forth without the letter, where he ſeeth need of it, and vouchſafeth ſo to do? But how can the vaſt unbelieving multitudes of the world experience what the light and Spirit of the Lord can do, being not ſubject to it, but rebelling againſt it, *Job* xxiv. 13. And why may not men now, by the light of the Spirit, come to know that Chriſt is come, dead, and riſen, as well as theſe things were known and believed before the ſcriptures were written? Yet, if a man ſhould not know the outward death of Chriſt, and his raiſing from the outward grave; yet being in the faith of the power (which whomſoever it toucheth and draweth to it, it redeems) that gives him a right to all that was done by Chriſt; for then he hath union with the thing which ſaves, and ſtrength from it againſt that which deſtroys. Yea, there was a time when the diſciples of Chriſt were in the faith, and yet neither knew nor believed his death and reſurrection:

yea,

yea, Peter, with no ſmall confidence, ſaid, *Lord, this ſhall not be unto thee*, Matt. xvi. 22.

As touching that paſſage of renouncing the works not only of the old covenant, but even thoſe of the new alſo, as filthy rags, that is manifeſtly unſcriptural and unſavoury; the works of the new covenant being fruits of God's Holy Spirit, which he works in us and for us. If any man be in Chriſt, there is a new creation (where the old things are paſſed away); and he that walks after this rule, walks in the newneſs of the Spirit, and the Spirit moves, and lives, and works in him. Not I, but Chriſt in me. And as the root is holy, ſo is alſo the fruit, The fear which God puts into the heart is clean, and keeps the heart clean; and out of the good, and honeſt, and clean heart, comes good, honeſt, and clean fruit, which is not unclean, like filthy rags. Read *Iſai.* lxiv. 5. and conſider it, waiting on the Lord to open thine underſtanding. Were the works which the apoſtle ſpeaks of, *Heb.* xi. and *Jam.* ii. 24 to be reckoned as filthy rags?

Abraham was acquainted with the inviſible eternal Word, and was turned from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto God; and in his converted eſtate had the promiſe of the ſeed; and ſaw, with the reſt of the prophets, through the day of his fleſh to the day of his Spirit, 1 *Pet.* i. 10, 11, 12.

David was a ſpiritual man, and knew the Word of the new covenant; which is a lantern to the feet, and a light to the paths, of the children of the new covenant, who witneſs and experience their way cleanſed by taking heed thereto according to this Word. And the precepts, ſtatutes, laws, commandments, ordinances, judgments, *&c.* of this Word are a myſtery to all that are not acquainted with it. But they that are acquainted with it, and in the pure fear and humility wait upon it, they learn of it the way of its precepts, and are guided by the Spirit of the Lord in the way everlaſting.

The wiſdom which Solomon ſpeaks of, is undoubtedly Chriſt, the Word eternal. It is much thou ſhouldſt boggle at this. He is the Sun of the inward world, which enlightens the dark inward world; not that they ſhould abide in the darkneſs, but by the virtue and power of his light come out of it. And friend; mark theſe following words, and wait upon the Lord for the true underſtanding of them. Till thou witneſs the inward Word, with the inward law and teſtimony thereof, and know its commandment to be a lamp, and its law a light, *&c.* thou canſt never witneſs the perfect keeping and preſervation from the evil woman, from the flattery of the tongue of the ſtrange woman; but wilt be apt to luſt after her beauty in thy heart, and to be taken with her eye-lids. But if thou know and keep wiſdom's commandments, thou wilt thereby witneſs life indeed, according to that ſaying of Chriſt, *If a man keep my ſayings, he ſhall never ſee death.* And Chriſt directed his apoſtles to wait for his Spirit to receive his ſayings from, who teacheth not only the greateſt, but the leaſt, in the new covenant, writing

writing his law in their hearts, which law is light. And if any man hear the inward voice of wiſdom, and turn at her reproofs, ſhe will pour out her ſpirit unto him, ſhe will make known her words unto him.

The ſame thing that teaches to do juſtly, and love mercy, teacheth alſo to walk humbly with the Lord. It is the ſame grace which brings ſalvation, which teacheth to live godlily, that teacheth alſo to live ſoberly and righteouſly. What I had in my former profeſſion and congregational way, the Lord brake by a mighty hand; but yet in tender mercy he was with me, preſerving me in the midſt of the ſtorms, and floods, and roarings of the enemy upon me, till his freſh viſiting of me. And he viſited me with his own Spirit, with the eternal light, life, and power thereof; and I know it to be the ſame thing which had been with me from the beginning; yea, the child, being quickened and raiſed out of the grave, preſently knew its Father, and cannot but honour and bear teſtimony to that appearance of truth, wherewith his Father viſited him, and wherein he hath felt the renewing and reſtoring of his former work. And they that knew me formerly, before the Lord daſhed me to pieces, could and did witneſs, that the Lord had given me true humility, and my ſoul did witneſs a walking with him in the humility which he gave me. And now I witneſs from him, in this precious diſpenſation of his life and power, the very ſame humility (and bleſſed be his name, with great increaſe), and a freſh walking with him therein, in a freſh ſenſe and meltings and bowings of ſpirit before him night and day. I do confeſs I took it to be a natural thing, and overlooked and deſpiſed it, till the Lord opened my underſtanding, and ſhewed me what it was, and how he wrought by it, and that it was a myſtery hid from all, but thoſe to whom he revealed it. And indeed I do hang daily upon the Lord in this for life and power, and am very weak without, but ſtrong as it pleaſeth the Father to manifeſt himſelf in me, and to breathe upon me through it; yea, indeed, my life, peace, reſt, hope, joy, delight, *&c.* is a continual gift from the Father of ſpirits, who hath manifeſted himſelf near unto me, and ſhewn me his dwelling-place. And I am ſatisfied that the Spirit of the Lord, by his immediate light, is able to reach the darkeſt heart in the darkeſt part of the world, and to turn his mind to, and give him belief in, that which ſaves, and to ſave him thereby.

The word of faith which the apoſtles preached, and the word of life eternal, and the light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world, differ not, but are the ſame; and the light wherewith he enlightens them, that they might believe in him who enlighteneth, is of the ſame nature with the Enlightener, and ſufficient to guide them to the faith of him. But friend; take heed of reproaching the truth. Though thou mayeſt do it ignorantly, yet it is not wholly excuſable. Haſt thou heard the preaching which thou ſpeakeſt thus ſlightly of? If thou haſt not, ſurely thou ſhouldeſt have heard and conſidered, before thou hadſt judged. Thou ſetteſt up

thine

thine own underſtanding, and a judgment according to the appearance of things to thee, inſtead of the true and righteous judgment; therein expoſing thyſelf to the righteous judgment of the Lord, who judgeth in truth and righteouſneſs, and far otherwiſe in this matter than thou doſt.

Chriſt is the pearl of price, or treaſure hid in a field. The field is the world. The word is in man's heart. And yet this myſtery was hid from ages and generations; and the kingdom which the Phariſees ſought, was within them; who were as far from any ſenſe and underſtanding of it, as the Gentiles; and ſo though it was within them, yet they were without it; they had no knowledge, no underſtanding, no ſenſe of it, had reaped no benefit by it, but were enemies and alienated in their minds from it. Ah! what palate and underſtanding is that, to which this is unſpiritual and unſavoury? But how bold and preſumptuous, do mens apprehenſions (which they take up from the letter of the ſcriptures, without the light and leading of God's Spirit) make them, even to fly in the face of that which is certainly known, witneſſed, and experienced to be of God, as well as held forth in the ſcriptures, as *Col.* i. 27, ſee the Greek.

As to thoſe harſh expreſſions, vilifying the truth of our God, and the converſion to him thereby; I ſhall only ſay this; well, friend, go on; reproach us and our teſtimony, and the truth of our God, as being able to lead us no further than morality, *&c.* we aſſuredly know and experience, and faithfully teſtify as in God's ſight, that it hath led us further into the myſtery and power of life, and into union and fellowſhip with the Father and the Son, than your doctrines ever have done or can do. For the apprehenſions of man upon ſcriptures are paſſing away, and the pure truth itſelf, which the ſcriptures teſtify of, is already revealed, and further to be revealed, and to have the glory.

Ye think we ſet up a natural light, and eſteem it ſpiritual; but we are taught of God to diſtinguiſh, underſtandingly and experimentally, between nature, and him from whom nature came; who is the word of life, the Lord God of life, beſides whom there is no Saviour; who is near to every man to warn him of, turn him and deliver him from, the devourer and oppreſſor of the ſoul. Now though the veſſels in which the light ſhines be natural, and filled with darkneſs, and become darkneſs in the darkneſs; yet the Diſcoverer, Reprover, and Checker thereof, which giveth the living ſound in the veſſel, is ſpiritual; even the Spirit of the Lord God, which ſtriveth with fallen man in the midſt of his darkneſs and captivity at ſeaſons, according to his good pleaſure. This the Shepherd of our ſouls hath taught us, opening our ears, and cauſing us to hear and know his voice, and to learn of him; who is truth, and ſpeaketh truth; who is life and Spirit, and giveth of his own eternal life and Spirit to his children.

To the Sixth.

What others have been I know not; but this I know concerning myſelf, that I was ſettled firmly in the doctrines which ye now own, and in the congregational way of worſhip, till the Lord ſmote me and brake me to pieces. Which ſuch as I did converſe with (to wit, teachers, and others of eſteem in that way) profeſſed they could not conceive the ground of; but ſaid it was a prerogative caſe, and did not doubt but the iſſue thereof would be good unto me. But what if the ſheep were ſcattered, before the Shepherd came to gather them? What if they were wandering from mountain to hill, ſeeking their reſting place? What if they went mourning up and down from one watchman to another, from one ſort of people to another, inquiring after their beloved? Did this make them unfit to be pitied and viſited by the Shepherd? What ſort did Chriſt gather in the days of his fleſh? Were they not deſpiſed of the wiſe, learned, ſettled ones (in their knowledge of the law and prophets)? But bleſſed be the Lord, who hath now manifeſtly revealed the foundation, and the kingdom that can never be ſhaken, and in his mercy and tender love, and by his power, fixed them thereon; that they know in whom they have believed, and how they came to believe; and have taken up the croſs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, wherein the power is manifeſted to crucify that, which cannot otherwiſe be crucified.

The *Seventh* hath been largely ſpoken to already.

To the Eighth.

The Lord God knoweth, that it is not in my heart to judge or ſet at nought any man; but in faithfulneſs to God, and in tender love to ſouls, to teſtify to others what I have ſeen in his light, as he requireth of me. And is this ſetting them at nought? It is true, they cannot believe nor receive the teſtimony in the ſtate wherein they ſtand; but that doth not diſannul or weaken it; but truth and its teſtimony ſtands, notwithſtanding their rejecting and riſing up againſt it.

To the firſt particularly. To own and contend earneſtly for the ſcriptures aright, is good; but it was not good formerly to ſet up the writings of Moſes and the prophets above and againſt Chriſt; nor is it good now to ſet up the ſcriptures above the Spirit, or to make them the tryer inſtead of the anointing, *John* ii. 27. for the ſcriptures came from the Spirit, and they teſtify of the Spirit; and the Spirit is to be received and to dwell in the ſoul as in its temple: and here the King and Law-giver of the church (with the balance of the ſanctuary) is indeed known. And he that receives the Spirit is to live in the Spirit, and walk in the Spirit, and in the light of the New Jeruſalem; which light is eternal, diſcovering, diſpoſſeſſing, and working out the darkneſs, and ſo taking up its place.

Now though ye may aim at having things concerning churches, and church-worſhip, regulated according to the ſcriptures; yet ye may eaſily err therein

therein, and cannot but err therein, if your underſtandings be not opened and kept open by the Spirit; yea, ye may not wait for the Spirit's gathering and building, but may gather of yourſelves, and build of yourſelves; whereas the apoſtles were to wait for the power from on high to do their work with. And were your eyes truly opened, ye would quickly and eaſily ſee, that neither your preaching nor praying is at all like theirs. They ſpake what they received from the Spirit; ye, what ye apprehend and conceive concerning words ſpoken of by the Spirit. This is very ſhort of ſpeaking as God's oracles. And one ſort of you conceives thus, and another thus, concerning the ſcriptures, *&c.*

To the ſecond. Till ye know the Spirit, and come to the true waiting upon the Spirit, and underſtand his voice, ye can never recover the form of ſound words by reading the ſcriptures; but will be liable to be ſetting up your own conceivings and apprehenſions, inſtead of the truth itſelf. And till ye have the true underſtanding of the Spirit, ye cannot but alſo err concerning the power, and about your experiences of things; and ſo will be continually in great danger of being deceived, and of deceiving one another's ſouls.

To the third. Ye have a notion about Chriſt's active and paſſive obedience being imputed to the ſoul as its righteouſneſs, which the ſcriptures ſpeak not; and which manifeſts that ye do not know how the righteouſneſs is revealed, and how the Son is made of God unto them righteouſneſs, who wait upon him in the faith, and obey his goſpel. For the righteouſneſs is revealed in the faith, and is further and further made the ſoul's, in and by the faith.

To the Ninth.

God is my witneſs (whom I worſhip in ſpirit, and in whoſe fear I write and ſpeak) that I dearly love you; and in the truth and dearneſs of love, earneſtly deſire concerning you, that ye may not miſtake about Chriſt, his Spirit, his ſcriptures; about faith, love, mortification; and about the righteouſneſs, peace, and joy of the kingdom, or any other ſpiritual thing; but may know, experience, and enjoy the truth and ſubſtance of things, as they are in Jeſus. Now, if ye know, and have received, the true living faith, and witneſs the powerful, purifying virtue of it, which God hath given to overcome the world, and the wicked one with; how comes it about that there is ſuch a belief in you, that it can never do its work perfectly in this world, but only in part? Surely this belief is not of, or from, the true faith; nor to the honour of him that hath given it. For the ſpiritual weapons are mighty through God, to the pulling down of the ſtrong-holds, and bringing all (even every thought) into ſubjection to Chriſt.

To

To the Tenth.

That God did as much for Judas as for Peter, is not our doctrine: for God giveth more or leſs out of his rich treaſury, according to his own good pleaſure. But the unprofitable ſervant had alſo a talent given him, which he did not improve, but hid it in a napkin; and his Lord condemned him therefore. There were others had talents likewiſe, which they did improve, and their Lord accepted and juſtified them therein; ſaying, *Well done, good and faithful ſervant, thou haſt been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter into the joy of thy Lord.*

Now is there juſt ground for any of theſe ſervants to boaſt and ſay, the other had a talent as well as I; but I made myſelf to differ; I improved my talent; whereas he did not? The true Jew doth believe, doth obey the goſpel, and hath praiſe of God (he that hateth the light, doth not believe nor obey); and yet he ſeeth no ground of boaſting: for it was not he, of himſelf, but the grace and power of the Lord, wrought all in him. And what is done in, and by, and through the power of the Lord; the honour and glory thereof properly belongs to the Lord. Yea, he that is in the true faith, feels that which excludes boaſting, and keeps in the ſenſe of the love and mercy. Oh! that thou kneweſt a limit and check to this wiſdom, and theſe reaſonings in thee, which are not of, but againſt, the truth; as that light which thou deſpiſeſt would manifeſt to thee, if thou kneweſt the nature and virtue of it, and didſt cleave unto it. In this wiſdom and underſtanding thou mayeſt read much, and comprehend much, and be greatly taken with thine apprehenſions upon ſcriptures; but it is ſhut out of the true knowledge of them, and out of the Spirit and power of life, which they that wrote them were in, and witneſſed of.

As for free-will; we own no ſuch thing as man's free-will to good in the fallen eſtate. But the Spirit of the Lord changeth and reneweth the will in the day of his power; and whoever he ſtriveth with, and draweth, may come in the drawing; virtue iſſuing out with the drawing from him that draweth. And this is not the condemnation, that men *cannot* come to the Son, that they might have life; but that they *do* not come; that they do not turn, at the reproof of his wiſdom, from that which he ſtands ready to turn them from.

There may be high admirations concerning God and his love, in the natural part; which we have known, and are made able in the Lord to judge of, ſince he hath taught us to diſtinguiſh of things: and this is chaffy in all ſorts of men. But there is a feeling of the pure nature of heavenly love, and a ſinking therein into the deep ſenſe thereof; and an acknowledging of it to God, in the humility, in the fear, in the Spirit, and in the power. Now this is indeed from the beloved, and accepted with God in the beloved. And in this his children, who are ſtripped of their own ability of admiring and loving, are taught of him to love and admire him,

him, being gathered out of that which is natural of man, into that which is ſpiritual, and of God.

As for the Four Queries at the cloſe, which I propounded in love, and for advantage to thee; it ſeemeth to me ſtrange thou ſhouldſt ſay thou wouldſt ſpeak to the ſenſe of them, and yet ſo waive the main drift and plain ſenſe.

The Firſt was, Concerning Chriſt's being ſpiritually born of his church; to which thou haſt ſaid nothing at all, but that the firſt Chriſtians and churches were very glorious, *&c.* Which they alſo can own, who have denied the faith, and are not in the truth.

To the Second thou haſt anſwered as little, nor rightly according to the letter, putting in the dragon inſtead of the beaſt.

Thy Third and Fourth are alſo ſhort, and not directly to the thing; but I wrote not to contend. The Lord God ſhew thee mercy, bring down the wrong wiſdom in thee, bring thee into a capacity of knowing and receiving his pure living truth, that thou mayeſt not witneſs or fight againſt him; but, in and by his Spirit, underſtand the ſcriptures aright, and witneſs for him.

Nineteenth of the Twelfth Month, 1667.

I. P.

POST-

POSTSCRIPT.

THERE is a word of advice in my heart to thee, which it behoveth thee ſeriouſly and uprightly to wait on the Lord, to be made able to weigh and conſider aright; it is this. Take heed of ſetting up the letter above or againſt the Spirit (for that is not right in the ſight of God); and take heed alſo of ſetting up thine own wiſdom, conceivings, and apprehenſions above both; for that is a dangerous way of erring, and may prove a great ſnare to thy ſoul; as it hath been formerly, and is at this day to many. If ye had known what this meaneth (ſaid Chriſt) *I will have mercy, and not ſacrifice*, ye would not have condemned the guiltleſs. We own the ſcriptures truly and ſingly, being taught of God ſo to do, and do not hold forth any thing contrary thereto, or deny any thing therein contained; but are witneſſes (living witneſſes) of the truths expreſſed and related therein; but mens meanings and conceivings thereupon (who, though they will acknowledge, that a man cannot underſtand the ſcriptures without the Spirit, yet will venture, in their own wiſdom, ſpirit, and underſtanding, to expound and give meanings) we cannot own, nor them, in ſuch their apprehenſions and practices.

That in thee, or any, which breathes after the Lord, we have unity with; but that wiſdom and comprehenſion which is above it, and a veil over it, and contrary to is nature, and which is a limit and bond to the precious ſeed, we cannot have unity with, becauſe it is of the ſame nature with that which the Lord hath condemned and deſtroyed in us, and he will not ſuffer it to live in others, where his life and power prevails.

A FEW

EXPERIENCES

Concerning ſome of the

WEIGHTY THINGS

RELATING TO

GOD's

EVERLASTING KINGDOM.

Given forth in true and tender Love, for the Help of any ſuch of the Race of the true Travellers as may ſtand in need thereof,

BY

ISAAC PENINGTON.

THE PREFACE.

IT hath pleaſed the Lord to unſeal and open the fountain of life in the midſt of his heritage, ſo that in his light do they ſee light, and in his life do they reap and enjoy life. And the precious promiſes are fulfilled in the midſt of them, of ſending the Comforter, and pouring out of the Holy Spirit, ſo that he that believeth, "out of his belly do flow rivers of living "water." Yea, the Lord hath a vineyard, which he keepeth night and day (leſt any hurt it), and watereth every moment. Oh! the ſtreams of life, the ſtreams of love, the ſtreams of grace, the ſtreams of mercy, the ſtreams of peace, the ſtreams of joy and conſolation, which flow from him into the boſoms of his children! Indeed grace, and mercy, and peace are multiplied from God our Father, in and through the Lord Jeſus Chriſt daily, inſomuch as that ſaying of Chriſt to his diſciples (*John* xiv. 26, 27.) is now fulfilled, "I ſay not that I will pray the Father for you; for the Fa-"ther himſelf loveth you," *&c.* The Father, in his love, hath brought us to the Son; and the Son, in the ſame love, hath brought us back to the Father; and now the love flows from the Father in and through the Son, moſt naturally and abundantly. And where the heart is circumciſed, and much forgiven, there love returns back moſt truly and abundantly; ſo that the Lord our God, in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, is loved with all the heart, and with all the ſoul, and nothing is thought too good to ſacrifice to him, nor nothing too much to ſuffer for him. Oh! the pure love that ſprings and flows between the heavenly Father and the ſpiritual child! The beſt love that is to be found in this world (in the men of the world) is not worthy to be a ſhadow of it. God is love, and his children are of him, and partake of, and dwell in, the ſame love; though the enmity, and higheſt wiſdom of this world, know them not; as it never could know the children of the true wiſdom.

Now from this fountain do not only iſſue ſprings and ſtreams of life to refreſh our own hearts; but teſtimonies concerning the life which we feel

and

and partake of, and concerning our travels from the dark land through the valley of tears (where he that gave us life was our well) towards our reſting-place.

Theſe alſo ſpring up in us for the ſakes of others; of which nature are the things which follow, in this little treatiſe. For not for my own ſake only did they ſpring up in me, but to ſignify to others of the mercy the Lord hath ſhewn me, and the way wherein he hath led me, and what he hath given me to taſte of and experience in the way; which will anſwer every true palate, every palate that is ſeaſoned with life, and with true experience. And having received them from the Lord for this very end, to hold them forth to others, in love and in tenderneſs of ſpirit my heart is freely given up to him therein; not aiming at any thing thereby but his glory ſingly, and the good of ſuch ſouls to whom he ſhall pleaſe to extend favour and ſhew mercy, in opening the heavenly myſtery of life and ſalvation.

I have often ſaid in my heart, *Who hath begotten me there? Who would have ſaid that Sarah ſhould have given children ſuck?* My wound was deep, and ſeemed incurable; but bleſſed be the Lord, who hath made known to me the phyſician of value, for whom no diſeaſe is too hard, but he is able to cure every ſickneſs, and to relieve and reſcue all that are captived and oppreſſed by the devil, that come unto him, and wait upon him, in the way of his righteous judgments and moſt tender mercies. For after all my religion and deep exerciſes, and inward experiences and knowledge, I came to ſuch a loſs of what I once had, that I ſenſibly felt I knew not the Lord, and lay continually groaning and mourning after him, and deeply afflicted for want of him. Oh! the pure, living, and precious life, and ſweet preſence of my God, that my ſoul wanted! inſomuch as my moiſture was turned into the drought of ſummer, and my bones grown dry and withered! But at length the Lord, in his goodneſs (Oh! bleſſed for ever be his name!) breathed upon the dry bones, and I felt life enter from him into me, and the days of deep ſorrow and diſtreſs were at length forgotten, becauſe a heavenly birth was at length conceived and brought forth. And now where is the ſackcloth? Where are the aſhes? Oh! there is beauty in life, inſtead of the aſhes in the ſtate without life; and the garment of praiſe, inſtead of the ſpirit of heavineſs! O glory, glory, to the binder up of the bruiſed and broken-ones, to the Redeemer of the captives, to the repairer of the breaches, to the builder up of the waſted and deſolate-ones! Glory to his tender mercy, glory to his grace, glory to his love, glory to his wiſdom, glory to his power, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

A FEW

EXPERIENCES, &c.

I.

A faithful Teſtimony concerning the True and Pure Way of Life; with Breatheings for ſuch as have Deſires after it, and yet are Strangers to it.

THIS hath been the cry of my ſoul from my childhood, even after holineſs, after the preſence of the Lord, after union with him, after the nature and image of his Son, after a ſeparation from what was contrary to him, and a being brought forth in the power of his life.

Now bleſſed be the Lord, that is revealed which anſwers the cry; which ſo far as my ſoul comes to partake of, it is refreſhed and ſatisfied with the ſupply of that, which it thirſted and cried after.

And all that have felt the true cry, Oh! that they might alſo be taught of God, and learn aright how to wait upon him, and to walk humbly and in fear before him, that nothing might come between them and the cry of their ſouls; but they might be led by him into the enjoyment and poſſeſſion of that, which the true birth (which is born of the Spirit, and is Spirit) naturally longs after.

Now truly there is no other way to life and ſatisfaction, than by believing in that power, and following that power, which raiſed Chriſt from the dead; for that is to work the work in all that are ſaved. To feel this power revealed within, to have the mind turned to this power, to follow this power in the regenerating work and path, is the way to partake of its virtue, and to experience the redemption which is thereby and therefrom.

And he that is born of the Spirit, and hath his eye opened by the Spirit, and daily exerciſed thereby; he knoweth the Spirit, and is acquainted with his

his ſtirrings and movings, and taught of God to diſtinguiſh them from the evil ſpirit, its ſtirrings and movings; and ſo doth not quench the Spirit of God, nor grieve it when it moves; nor give way to the other ſpirit, when it moves and allures.

Now the ſpirit of deceit allures and guides men not ſo much by outward rules, as by an inward evil nature, and by the law of ſin and death. So the Spirit of truth leads into truth, by the newneſs and power of its own life revealed in the heart, by the pure inſtinct of life within, and by the law of God written in the nature of the new creature, which is nearer than words without. For God blots out of the hearts of his what Satan had written there, and writes by the finger of his Spirit what he would have the new-birth read there; and indeed there is a kingdom of life, of righteouſneſs, of true peace, and joy (yea, of the holy power and wiſdom of the Moſt High), for his children (which are born of his Spirit, and ſpring up of the immortal ſeed) to read.

Oh! why ſhould mens eyes be cloſed, and their hearts hardened againſt the truth! Why ſhould they cry up Chriſt in words, and cry out againſt his life and power where it is revealed! Is this to kiſs the Son? Can ſuch chuſe (who are guilty of this) but periſh in the way of their ſouls travels? And how many muſt needs periſh in their reſiſting the power of truth, and precious teſtimony of God's Holy Spirit (in this our day) tending to their reſcue and ſalvation from that which captivates and deſtroys?

Chriſt came to deſtroy ſin, he having received power from his Father ſo to do. He knoweth it to be of a deſtroying nature, and that it will deſtroy the ſoul, where it is not by the power of life conſumed and deſtroyed in the ſoul. Oh! moſt precious to us is that viſitation of truth, light, life, and power, which ſearcheth out and diſcovereth ſin to the very root, and alſo deſtroys it! Oh! glorious is that axe of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt which is laid to the root of the corrupt tree, and is daily hewing at and cutting it down, that it might cumber the ground no more; but that the heart might become good earth, ſanctified earth, circumciſed by the Lord to bring forth good fruit, good grapes, a good increaſe of the good ſeed of life to the good huſbandman, who is worthy to reap, even in this world, the grace and mercy, love and goodneſs, wiſdom and power, *&c.* which he plentifully ſoweth in the ſpirits of *his* daily. Glory to his name over all for ever, who hath exalted, exalteth, and will exalt, that which the ſeveral ſorts of high profeſſors, in their wiſdom, trample upon and deſpiſe.

II.

Concerning the perfecting of God's Work in the Heart.

IS it not the will of God that his people and children ſhould be ſanctified throughout, in ſoul, in body, in ſpirit?

Is it not the will of Chriſt that his diſciples ſhould be perfect, as their heavenly Father is perfect?

Did he not bid them pray, *Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven?* And would he never have them believe and expect that it ſhould be done in earth, as it is in heaven?

Doth not he who hath the true, pure, living hope (which anchors within the veil) purify himſelf, even as He is pure?

Is not this the way to enjoy the promiſes of God's holy preſence (who tabernacleth in his people that are cleanſed and ſanctified) to cleanſe ourſelves from all filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit, perfecting holineſs in God's fear? Will God dwell in an unholy temple? Will he dwell where ſin dwells? He may indeed to ſuch, when at any time they are tender, and truly melted before him, be to them as a wayfaring man that tarries for a night; but he will not take up his abode there, walk there, ſup there, and give them to ſup with him?

Hath not Chriſt received all power both in heaven and earth from his Father? Is not this the end of receiving his power, to bring down the ſoul's enemies, and to purify and ſanctify his church, that it may be without ſpot, or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing? Is he not the captain of our ſalvation, anointed to fight the battles of the Lord? Where is the fight? Where is the ſtrong man to be found, caſt out, his goods ſpoiled, and the houſe emptied of him, and all that belongs to him? Is not Chriſt the author of faith, the finiſher of faith; and doth not he carry on the work of faith with power? And what is the work of faith? Is it not to fight with, and overcome, ſin; to be too hard for the enemy at all his weapons? Is there not a whole armour of light, life, and ſalvation prepared? What is it prepared for? Is it not that the children of light ſhould be wholly armed with it? Were there never any wholly armed with it; or can the enemy prevail on thoſe that are wholly armed with it? Are thoſe that are armed with it afraid of the enemy, his power, his ſnares, his wiles? Or are they bold in the faith, following on, in the ſpiritual battles, him who rideth before them, conquering, and to conquer?

Oh! that mens eyes were opened by the Lord! then might they ſee the glory of truth, in the pure light which ſhines from God's holy mountain; and ſuch dark doctrines of the night (which tend to the diſhonour of Chriſt, his power, and love, and to the upholding of the enemy's kingdom) would paſs away, and prevail no more in the hearts of any that truly fear the Lord;

Lord; but they would quietly wait and hope for his ſalvation, that by the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus, they might be made free from the law of ſin and death, and not always be ſubject thereto! For all whom the Son maketh free, they are free indeed; and being made free by him, may ſerve God in freedom of Spirit, without fear, in holineſs and righteouſneſs before him, all the days of their lives. And then they know the power and virtue of the new covenant, and the defence which is thereby, where the wing of the Almighty overſhadows, and his ſalvation (revealed therein) is experienced for a ſufficient wall and bulwark againſt the enemy.

III.

Concerning the true Chriſt, how it may be certainly and infallibly known which is he.

WHILE people were in expectation and muſed in their hearts concerning John, whether he were the Chriſt or no, John anſwers the caſe, and tells them how they might diſcern and know the true Chriſt. It is not he that baptizeth with water, but he *that baptizeth with the Holy Ghoſt and with fire.* He *whoſe fan is in his hand*, wherewith he cometh *thoroughly to purge his floor, gathering the wheat into his garner, and burning the chaff with fire unquenchable.* Now he that knoweth him that doth this work, and experienceth him doing this work in him, doth he not know Chriſt? Oh! is it not precious to be baptized by him whom God hath appointed to baptize? Oh! the fan, the precious fan, wherewith Chriſt (who is the power and wiſdom of God) ſeparates the precious from the vile, ſevers the wheat and the chaff, gathers the wheat into the precious treaſury, and lets out the unquenchable fire upon the chaff! *Our God is a conſuming fire*, ſaith the apoſtle. *To what is he a conſuming fire?* Is it not to the chaffy, earthy, droſſy nature in men and women? Why bring the chaff near to the fire, will it not burn it up? And then (as that is burnt up and conſumed) that which is pure, that which is upright, that which is tender, that which is born of God, can dwell with, and delight in, the devouring fire, and everlaſting burnings. For God is not terrible to the child which is born of him, to him who is brought forth in the image and Spirit of his Son; but to the tranſgreſſing nature, to the ſeed of evil-doers, which are naturally inclined to do evil, and every day doing evil, he is terrible for evermore. Oh! bleſſed are they who believe in that power, and experience that power near, which raiſed Chriſt from the dead, and are baptized with his baptiſm! They have acceſs to God: for ſo the true Jews have been inwardly cleanſed and kept clean; but the unclean, who have only a notion of Chriſt's blood, and of his righteouſneſs, but are not waſhed thereby, nor cloathed therewith, nor ever knew what it was to put off the filthy garment, and to put on the white raiment, they may pray in their own wills and ſpirits; but they know not what it is to draw nigh to God in the Spirit and life of his Son,

Son, and ſo are yet to learn what it is to pray to the Father in the name of Chriſt. For none truly know Chriſt, but they who truly know and are led by his infallible Spirit. *They that have not the Spirit of Chriſt are none of his*; and they that have his Spirit, have that which is infallible. It is one thing to have words ſpoken concerning Chriſt, or formerly by Chriſt; another thing to have the infallible Spirit itſelf; to be infallibly born of the Spirit, and brought up in the light and life of the Spirit, that he may certainly know the Shepherd's voice from the voice of every ſtrange ſpirit.

IV.

Some QUERIES *to ſuch as affirm the Scriptures to be the only Rule, and deny the Spirit, the Seed of the Kingdom, the new Covenant, the holy Leaven of Life, the Law written in the Heart, to be the Rule of the Children of the new Covenant.*

Query 1. HOW are the ſcriptures the rule; or which of the ſcriptures are the rule? Are the whole ſcriptures the rule, from the beginning of *Geneſis* to the *Revelations?* Or are ſome parts of them the rule, ſome others not? If ſome parts of them be the rule, and ſome not, which parts are the rule, and which are not the rule? As to inſtance, in the book of *Job*; his friends ſpake many words concerning God, which were not ſo right as Job's, *Job* xlii. And alſo Job himſelf, in ſome of his words and ſpeeches, darkened counſel by words without knowledge, as he himſelf confeſſed, *Job* xlii. 3. Now which of Job's friends words are the rule, and which not; and which of Job's words are the rule, and which not?

Query 2. Moſes was the miniſter of the old covenant (for he miniſtered to the Jews the old covenant, which was glorious in its day); but he was not the miniſter of the new covenant. Now the new covenant, and miniſtration thereof, exceeds the old in glory. The writing of the law inwardly in the tables of the heart, is a more glorious miniſtration than the writing of it outwardly in tables of ſtone. Now were Moſes's words to the Jews under the old covenant intended by God to be the rule of the children of light under the new covenant? Shall the words of that miniſtration, which was to paſs away, be the rule of the children of that miniſtration which is to abide for ever?

Query 3. Did Moſes ſay, That when Chriſt came, my words which I ſpeak or write ſhall be your rule, or part of your rule? Or did he not rather ſay, *When God raiſeth up that prophet, him ſhall ye hear in all things?* Is there any one that is truly a ſheep, who is not ſo made by him who gives life to the ſoul? And after he is made alive, and knows the ſhepherd's voice, is he not to hear his voice for ever, who gives life eternal, and who leads into the paſtures of life, and to the pure ſtill waters, all that hear his voice and follow him? Read *John* xiv. 3, 4. and *Acts* iii. 22. and conſider.

Query

Query 4. Was not John as great, if not greater than Moſes? Had ever any the honour beſides him to be the immediate forerunner and preparer of the way, and to point to the Lamb of God as he did? And yet was not he to decreaſe in his miniſtry (it being not the goſpel miniſtration of the Spirit and power, as Chriſt's was) and Chriſt to increaſe in his goſpel-miniſtration? Is not the leaſt in the kingdom greater than John? And are not all that are quickened by Chriſt, and follow him, led by him into the kingdom? And who can give the rule of life in the kingdom but the king thereof? In the laſt days doth not the Lord ſpeak to his people by his Son? And is not he faithful in all his houſe, as a ſon, to give the law and rule of life to them in Chriſt?

Query 5. Are not all that are ſoldiers and ſubjects under Chriſt to follow him, their Lord and Captain, whitherſoever he goes or rules? How can they know whither he goes or rules, but by an inward eye and ear fixed upon, and open to him? So that when once they know his Spirit (the voice of his Spirit, as his true ſheep do), his movings, his drawings, his leadings, his going before, is their rule to follow. And they are not to grieve or quench his Spirit, in drawing back from any thing that he leads and draws them to.

Query 6. Is not Chriſt the way, the truth, the life; the living way, the living truth? Is not the living way the rule to them that live? Is not the truth itſelf the rule of all that are true? What ſhould rule and guide the ſpiritual man, that is born of the Spirit, but the wiſdom of the Spirit, but the oracle of God manifeſted in his temple and ſanctuary? That which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit, in which the Spirit is to dwell; and he in whom he dwells is to be ruled by him.

Query 7. What is that which the apoſtle calls the rule, *Gal.* vi. 15, 16. which if a man walk according to, peace will be upon him? Is it not the Word, power and wiſdom of God? Doth not he that walketh according to that, walk in the newneſs of the Spirit? Doth not he that walketh out of that, walk in the oldneſs of the letter at the beſt? Doth not he that believeth according to that, hopeth according to that, prayeth according to that; I ſay, doth not he believe, hope, and pray according to the rule? Doth not he that believeth, hopeth, prayeth otherwiſe (though ever ſo zealouſly and affectionately), yet, at beſt, can any better be ſaid of it, but that it is but in the oldneſs of the letter, and ſo is not in the right way which God requires in the goſpel-covenant?

Query 8. Is not the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus the law of the new covenant? And is not that the rule to the children of the new covenant? Is not the truth which makes free, the way and rule to them who are made free by it? Is the letter or Spirit the rule under the miniſtration of the Spirit? Let that which is ſenſible, and which feels and knows the truth and way of life (as it is in Jeſus) anſwer. Men may ſearch the ſcrip-

tures, and yet not come to Chriſt for life; and men may get deſcriptions and a knowledge of things out of the ſcriptures, and yet not receive from him the rule of the new life.

V.

Concerning the Light, wherewith Chriſt the Life enlighteneth every Man.

In him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light ſhineth in darkneſs, and the darkneſs comprehended it not. JOHN i. 4, 5.

WHAT is the darkneſs which comprehendeth not the light? Is it not man in the unregenerate ſtate? *Ye were darkneſs*, ſaith the apoſtle, ſpeaking concerning them as they had been in that ſtate.

Now it pleaſeth the Lord that in this darkneſs his pure light ſhould ſhine, to gather man out of the darkneſs. For unleſs light ſhould ſhine on man in his dark ſtate, he could never be gathered out of it; but he that is turned to the light, and followeth it, cannot abide in the darkneſs; but cometh into that which gathereth and preſerveth the mind out of it.

But of what nature is this light, which ſhineth in man in his dark ſtate? It is of a living nature; it is light which flows from life; it is light which hath life in it; it is the life of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, of the Word eternal, which is the light of men. And he who cometh to the true underſtanding, may thereby diſtinguiſh it from all other lights whatſoever.

There is a vaſt difference between it and the reaſon and underſtanding of a man: for the natural man, with his underſtanding, is dead; but this is living and powerfully operating in man, as it finds entrance, and as his mind is joined to it. He that is dead, indeed, knows it not; but he that is alive unto God, feels the virtue of it. This light is above all gathered knowledge whatſoever, and above all deſcriptions of things whatſoever: for it is the thing itſelf, even of the nature of him from whom it flows. A man may get a notion from this into his mind, which he may retain the dead knowledge of, yea, his notion may quickly be dead in them; but he that dwells in the thing itſelf, knows that, and dwells in that which never dies.

VI.

A few Words further concerning Perfection.

WHAT was the intent of God in commending Job to Satan for a perfect and upright man, one that feared God and eſchewed evil? Was it not to repreſent him as a perſon whom he could not make any breach upon, or prevail upon to ſin? Thou haſt been ranging up and down the earth,

earth, tempting many, defiling many; what ſayeſt thou to my ſervant Job, Satan, is not he perfect? Is not he upright to me in his heart, and all his ways? Canſt thou make any breach upon him?

What ſaith Satan hereto? Doth he object any ſin againſt Job? He is the accuſer of the brethren; and if he have wherewith to accuſe, he will not fail to lay it to their charge, even before the throne of God. But what hath he to ſay againſt Job? What can he object (either againſt his uprightneſs, or againſt his perfection) to the Lord? Oh! ſays he, thou haſt ſet an hedge about him. He ſerves thee indeed perfectly and uprightly; I confeſs I have nothing to lay to his charge: but doth he ſerve thee for nought? But take away thy hedge, ſuffer me to winnow him, and thou ſhalt quickly ſee I ſhall have ſomewhat to lay to his charge, and that no ſmall matter neither: for do but take away thy bleſſing from him, wherewith thou haſt ſo abundantly bleſſed him, and he will ſoon curſe thee to thy face.

Well, the Lord giveth him leave to try if he can ſtain Job's uprightneſs and perfection: and now begins the trial, whether the devil's temptations ſhall bring him to ſin, or the fear of the Lord prevail to preſerve him from ſin.

Firſt, the devil hath power to touch all he hath; which he ſoon doth.

What doth this produce? Doth he ſin againſt the Lord, doth he murmur, doth he blaſpheme, as the devil had ſaid? No; he fell on the ground and worſhipped, acknowledging all to be the Lord's, and bleſſing his name. So that, in all this ſore affliction, he ſinned not, nor charged God fooliſhly, *Job.* i. 20, 21, 22.

But the commendation which God had given him, of being a perfect and upright man, fearing God and eſchewing evil, ſtill remains and ſtands good againſt Satan, *chap.* ii. iii.

Satan gets leave to try him yet further, inſinuating againſt him, that if he may have liberty to ſmite his body, he ſhall eaſily prevail upon him to ſin; not being able at preſent to bring in any plea againſt his perfection and uprightneſs, againſt his fearing God and eſchewing evil. But this hath the ſame ſucceſs with the former; for he could not bring *Job* to ſin with his lips, *ver.* 10.

Now mind, Can any man, that hath his heart made upright by the Lord, keep that integrity, and ſin? Is not every ſin a departing from the purity, from the integrity? Was not every tranſgreſſion againſt the firſt covenant, out of the firſt covenant, even a departing from the limits of it? Is not every tranſgreſſion of the ſecond covenant a departing out of the limits of the ſecond covenant? He that abideth in Chriſt, doth he ſin? Can he ſin? Doth not he that ſins depart out of his light, out of his life, out of his power, into the darkneſs, into the death, into the temptation of the enemy? Is it not promiſed, I will put my fear in their hearts, and they ſhall not depart from me: while the fear which God puts into the heart abides there, can that man ſin? Doth not the pure fear cleanſe the heart, and

keep it clean, that the conſcience may be void of offence, both towards God and man? Is the conſcience void of offence, where ſin is committed either againſt God or man? When the blood flows in the pure light, doth it not waſh? Doth it not waſh clean? Doth it not make whiter than the ſnow? When ſin is entered into afterwards, and committed again, doth it not defile? Oh! read in the true ſenſe, in the true experience, with the true underſtanding, which God gives.

VII.

Concerning Imputation of Righteouſneſs.

THE ſcripture ſaith, that Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteouſneſs; and that ſo it ſhall be alſo to all that believe as he did, even in the ſame power which he believed in, *Rom.* iv. 23, 24.

Now thus we witneſs the thing: our minds being turned from ſin, and turned to the pure gift of God, that works a change in us. Herein we feel faith ſpring up, which faſtens our ſpirits to the power of life; and then we feel that (in the power of life) flow upon our ſpirits, which waſheth away our ſin; and all that is done in this holy and righteous faith, is of the holy, righteous life and power, and accepted with the Lord; and that which condemns ſin in us, never condemns any work which is wrought in God, but juſtifies it. So that the root of ſin, with all that flows from it, is condemned by the righteous principle of life; but the root of holineſs, with all that flows from it, is juſtified. And this is our righteouſneſs, even Chriſt the holy power of life, who condemns and caſts out ſin: and it is great joy to any of us to feel the root of ſin ſtruck at, and condemned by his power, and him caſting ſin out of us, and the root of righteouſneſs growing up in us, and bearing us, and cauſing us to bring forth fruit to God. And here we ſenſibly find we have right to the ſcriptures, to the promiſes, to all that Chriſt did and ſuffered for us, and witneſs the propitiation by and through him, and bleſs God for all the diſpenſations of life, wherein he hath appeared to the children of men in any age, which were all glorious and excellent in their ſeaſon; but the diſpenſation of the Spirit is the ſtanding diſpenſation, which excels in glory, which Chriſt, in the days of his fleſh, pointed his diſciples to wait for, which his going away was to make way for. This diſpenſation was revealed and ſet up before the apoſtaſy from the life and Spirit of the apoſtles, and is again revealed and ſet up in power and great glory, after the long night of apoſtaſy; bleſſed be the name of the Lord for ever. For the darkneſs is already paſſed away from many ſpirits, and the true light again ſhineth. Glory in the higheſt to the God of life and glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*

VIII.

VIII.

Some QUERIES *concerning the Time and Work of Reformation.*

Query 1. WHAT did the time of *Reformation and Subſtance* (ſpoken, of *Heb.* ix. 10.) ſignify and point at in relation to the myſtery? Was it not for the bringing in of the goſpel; the day of Chriſt's Spirit and power; the day of his inward renewing and reforming; the day of his taking his fan into his hand, to purge his floor; the laying his axe to the root of the corrupt tree, that he may deſtroy the works of the devil in mens hearts, caſting down and plucking up what his heavenly Father hath not planted there? When he cometh as a refiner's fire, and fuller's ſoap, to purify the ſons of Levi, as gold and ſilver is purged, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteouſneſs; is not this the time of reformation?

Query 2. Who is the reformer? Is it not the Lord Jeſus Chriſt? Doth not he create anew? Doth not he blot out the old image, and form into a new lump? For if any man be in Chriſt, there is a renewing there; a new building there; yea, old things are paſſed away there; there is nothing in him but what is new. He is faithful (in all his houſe) inwardly to judge, condemn, crucify, ſubdue, deſtroy whatſoever is contrary to the nature and Spirit of his Father, and to form and build up the ſpirits of his in that which is new and pure.

Query 3. How, or by what, doth Chriſt reform? Is it not by his Spirit and power, by the light thereof, by the life thereof, by the virtue thereof? For nothing can change and reform the heart but that which is more powerful than him who corrupteth it.

Query 4. Where doth Chriſt reform and new-create? Is it not in the new covenant; in the faith and obedience thereof? Doth he not, by the laws thereof, break and diſannul the laws of the old covenant, and make void the covenant of hell and death; and ſo make an everlaſting covenant of life and peace; even an holy, pure, living agreement, between God his Father and the ſouls of his? Thus by his light he overcomes darkneſs; by his life he overcomes death; by his pure nature and Spirit he overcomes (chains down, ſubdues, and deſtroys) that which is impure, breaking the bond of ſin and iniquity, and letting the oppreſſed go free from under it. Thus he manifeſts himſelf to be the Saviour by his holy anointing, breaking the yoke of the oppreſſor, *Iſai.* x. 27.

Query 5. Whom doth Chriſt reform? Are they not thoſe who take his yoke upon them, and learn of him? Are they not thoſe who are turned to the light of his Spirit, inwardly made manifeſt; turned from the darkneſs, walking no more therein, but in his pure light? They that own his inward appearance in their hearts, and turn (from the enmity there) to him, receiving his light, his law, his life, his Spirit, them doth he exerciſe daily, and is daily reforming their hearts and ways thereby. But if any man receive him not

not his light, his life, his Spirit, within, ſuch an one is none of his; and he may reform himſelf as much as he can, but he knoweth not yet the day of the true reformation.

Query 6. How are they to walk whom Chriſt has begun to reform? Is it not in that light, in that Spirit, in that covenant, in that grace, wherein and whereby he hath in ſome meaſure reformed them? Is it not in the newneſs of the Spirit, and in the newneſs of the law thereof? Here Chriſt walked before the Father in all well-pleaſing (*Lo, I come; I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart,* ſaid he, *Pſal.* xl. 7, 8.) and here all his are alſo to walk, 1 *John* ii. 6. For indeed there is no pleaſing the Father, or Chriſt our Lord and maſter, out of the virtue, life, and newneſs of his own Spirit.

Query 7. What was the glory that was to follow the ſufferings of Chriſt, ſpoken of, 1 *Pet.* i. 11? Was it not the glory of his inward reformation in the hearts of the children of the new covenant? Doth not Chriſt give of his grace in the goſpel? And doth not his grace make a glorious change? Doth not he give of his Spirit to his children? And doth not his Spirit change from ſin, from ſhame, into holineſs, into true beauty, into the heavenly glory, and ſo from glory to glory, tranſlating more and more into the glory? Doth not Chriſt appear gloriouſly in the hearts of his, and in the aſſemblies of his, who meet together in his name, and wait upon him in that which is pure and living of him? And is there not a covering, or defence of the wing of the Almighty, upon the glory? *Iſa.* iv. 5.

Query 8. Was not this glory brought forth in the days of the apoſtles? Was not great grace then upon them all? I mean ſuch as received and held the truth in the love of it). Did they not witneſs the peace which paſſeth man's underſtanding? Had they not received the holy and ſpiritual underſtanding from him that is true; and were they not in him that is true? Did they not know victory and dominion over ſin and death? Did not the little babes witneſs pardon of ſin, and know him who preſerveth from ſin? Had not the young men overcome the wicked-one; and were not the elders ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might? Were they not come to the ſpiritual Sion, and heavenly Jeruſalem; and did they not walk in the light of the lamb, and of the holy city, before God the judge of all? There is no man, in theſe our days, can ſo much as conceive the glory of that ſtate, but he that hath taſted of a meaſure thereof.

Query 9. Was not this glory eclipſed, and did not a great darkneſs come over it, hiding it from the ſons of men, ſo that (for ages and generations) they knew not the true Spirit, the true light, the true life, the everlaſting covenant, the holy goſpel, the true church, the man-child, *&c.* but theſe, with many other heavenly myſteries, have been hid from their eyes.

Query 10. What hath got up ſince theſe have been hid? Have not the ſhadows of the night took place, and overſpread the Chriſtian ſtate, inſtead of the light of the day? Hath not antichriſt got up, and a falſe church appeared;

appeared; that which hath been tender, and begotten of God, ſnibbed, bowed down, curbed, and perſecuted, and falſe devotion and worſhip ſet up inſtead of the true?

Query 11. Muſt not antichriſt be deſtroyed, the falſe church judged, the true church come out of the wilderneſs into which ſhe fled, the man-child appear again, conquering and to conquer all which hath riſen up from the ſpirit of darkneſs ſince the firſt breaking forth of the goſpel? And is not the goſpel to be preached again to them that dwell on earth; even to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people? *Rev.* xiv. 6.

Now who is wiſe to underſtand the appearance of the Lord, and the beginning of theſe things, which is in a way contrary to man's wiſdom; and ſo he that will diſcern them, muſt come out from following of the man's own ſpirit, nature, and wiſdom in himſelf, into the ſenſe and leadings of him who giveth the true eye-ſight. The appearance of the Lord is inward and ſpiritual, and he muſt have an inward and ſpiritual eye who diſcerneth it. It was ſaid of old, by mockers and ſcoffers, Where is the promiſe of his coming? For all things continue as they were from the beginning. The ſame ſpirit will ſay ſo ſtill; and yet, to that eye which the Lord hath opened, he is already come inwardly, ſpiritually, in his own pure eternal life and power; and the precious effects of his coming are made manifeſt in many hearts; bleſſed be his name. Yea, he is further to appear in glory and pure brightneſs; and ſo we wait further for his appearance, both in our own hearts, and in the hearts of the children of men. We have met with our beloved; our God, whom we waited for, hath appeared. The Sun of righteouſneſs hath ariſen, with healing under his wings, and we have felt virtue and healing from him, and cannot but rejoice and teſtify of his ſalvation.

And what further manifeſtations of himſelf he hath yet to give forth, we are ſure to partake of, being formed by him in Spirit, and found in that wherein he appears, and from whence his glory ſhines. Oh! that all that love the Lord Jeſus Chriſt in any meaſure of ſincerity, did know the way of the goſpel, which is in the Spirit, light, life, and power, which is eternal, even in the grace and truth which is in him! And his kingdom, which is ſpiritual, and not of this world, cannot be ſhaken by this world (nor his Mount Sion removed); but is able to ſhake all nations and kingdoms which kiſs not the Son, but oppoſe him. Bleſſed are they who are turned to the light of his Spirit, and who therein kiſs and obey him.

IX.

Some QUERIES *concerning the Spirit of Chriſt, or the Spirit of the Father (it being one and the ſame Spirit) for thoſe who take themſelves to be Chriſtians (and under the Goſpel Diſpenſation) to conſider and examine themſelves by, that they may not be deceived, either concerning their preſent Eſtate here, or the eternal Eſtate of their Souls hereafter; ſeeing the Apoſtle ſo expreſly ſaith,* If any Man hath not the Spirit of Chriſt, he is none of his, ROM. viii.

Query 1. DOST thou know the Holy Spirit of the Father? Thou mayeſt have read ſomewhat concerning it, and have apprehenſions in thy mind about it; but doſt thou truly know what it is by its inward appearances and operations in thine own heart?

Query 2. Haſt thou received God's Holy Spirit into thy heart? Haſt thou let in Chriſt's Spirit, when he hath knocked at the door of thy heart, and received him? For he that is a true child, moſt naturally breatheth and crieth for the Father's Spirit; and the Father alſo moſt naturally giveth his Spirit to them that truly and rightly aſk it of him, *Luke* xi. 13. and thou muſt thankfully receive the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, when the Father gives him.

Query 3. Doth the Spirit of Chriſt dwell in thee? Hath the ſtronger man caſt the ſtrong man out of thee, and taken poſſeſſion of thy heart, and doth he dwell therein? Then thou mayeſt truly ſay, that thou art built up by God an habitation for him in the Spirit. Then thou art waſhed and cleanſed by him from thy filthineſs; and luſts or vain thoughts do not lodge in thee. For the Holy Spirit of Chriſt will not dwell where ſuch things lodge; but come out from among them, and be ye ſeparate, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and be a father to you, and ye ſhall be my ſons and daughters, ſaith the Lord Almighty, in whom I will dwell and walk, 2 *Cor.* vi. 15, 16, 17.

Query 4. Doth God's Spirit lead thee into all truth that thou needeſt know and walk in? Art thou a true Child, depending upon, and guided by, the Spirit of the Father? Canſt thou not ſee thy way, but as he maketh it known to thee? Art thou a follower of the ſpotleſs Lamb, in the ſame Spirit wherein he walked? If it be thus with thee, then art thou a child of God indeed.

Query 5. Doſt thou live in the Spirit? Doſt thou feel the Spirit of God to be a fountain of life, from whence life ſprings up into thee daily? Doſt thou witneſs that ſcripture fulfilled in thee, *He that believeth on me,* as the ſcripture hath ſaid, *out of his belly ſhall flow rivers of living water?* Haſt thou received the living water from Chriſt? And is that living water become a well of life in thee?

Query

Query 6. Doſt thou walk in the Spirit, in the life thereof, in the newneſs thereof ſpringing up in thy heart? Doſt thou know the difference between walking in the oldneſs of the letter, and in the newneſs of the Spirit?

Query 7. Didſt thou ever learn of the Father, to know Chriſt? And didſt thou ever learn of Chriſt, to know the Father? And hath the Father indeed revealed the Son to thee, and the Son indeed revealed the Father to thee? Or art thou yet only in the dead and dry notions, or barren comprehenſions about theſe things?

Query 8. Doſt thou know how the letter killeth, and how the Spirit quickeneth and maketh alive? And art thou made alive by the Spirit, and born of the heavenly water and Spirit, and ſo become ſpiritual as the ſcripture teſtifieth? *That which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit.*

Query 9. Art thou come under the miniſtration of the Spirit? Doſt thou know what the miniſtration of the Spirit is? Or doſt thou only know what the letter ſaith concerning the miniſtration of the Spirit, but art altogether ignorant of the miniſtration itſelf?

Query 10. Doſt thou know what the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus means? Haſt thou ever received this law; the law of the new covenant; the holy law of life written in thy heart by the finger of God's Spirit? For the ſame Spirit that wrote the law of the letter in tables of ſtone, writeth the law of the Spirit in the fleſhly tables of the heart.

Query 11. Doſt thou not grieve the Holy Spirit, nor quench it, nor deſpiſe the propheſyings thereof in thine own heart? For Chriſt is a king, a prieſt, a prophet; and he miniſters in his ſanctuary, in his temple (which the holy renewed heart is), in and by his Spirit.

Query 12. Doſt thou know what the anointing is? Art thou anointed therewith? And doth thy whole ability lie therein, inſomuch as that thou art daily ſenſible thou canſt not do any thing of thyſelf, but ſtill findeſt God working in thee, both to will and to do that which is right in his eyes, of his own good pleaſure?

Query 13. Did thy religion begin in the Spirit? In the living miniſtration of the new covenant? Did thy knowledge begin ſo; to wit, in feeling God opening thy heart by his Spirit, and giving thee the underſtanding whereby thou mighteſt know him? Did thy faith begin in his power, and doth it ſtand in the ſame power to this day? Oh! that men were ſenſible what is the right religion, and of the inward appearance of God's holy arm and power, which alone can redeem, and ſave the ſoul out of the hands of its enemies?

Query 14. Doth thy worſhip ſtand in the Spirit, and inward life of truth in thy heart? Art thou ſuch a worſhipper as the Father hath ſought out and made ſo? Or art thou a worſhipper of thine own or other mens making? And doſt thou keep within the limits of the living and ſpiritual worſhip, and not tranſgreſs the law thereof?

Oh! who would be miſtaken and deceived about ſuch weighty things as theſe, of ſo great neceſſity and concern? Who would miſs of God's Spirit, and of the law and covenant of life in Chriſt Jeſus, and be only in a dream concerning theſe things, without the true, demonſtrative knowledge, poſſeſſion, and enjoyment of them?

X.

Of the true Way (the Way of Holineſs, the Way of Life), and of the true Teaching and Knowledge.

CHRIST is the way, the only way to the Father; there is not another. Now every one that will truly know Chriſt, and come to Chriſt, muſt learn of the Father. It is written in the prophets, *All thy children ſhall be taught of the Lord*; *every one therefore that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me*, ſaid Chriſt. Here are two things neceſſary for every one that would come to Chriſt. One is hearing of the Father; the other is, learning what he teacheth. For though a man do hear the living voice of the Father, yet if he do not learn and keep the inſtruction of life received from him, he may be drawn aſide before he come to the Son. But he whoſe ears are opened to hear the voice, and who feels the inſtruction of life from the Father, to go to him in whom he hath placed life; here the Spirit of the Father ſecretly draws in the inwards of a man's mind and ſpirit, from that which is really dead, to that which is truly living.

Now, when a man is come to the Son, in whom the Father hath placed the fullneſs of life, then he ſhall witneſs him the way to the Father, and he will teach him daily of the Father. And here is the ſtate of true ſubjection to the Son experienced, whom the ſoul muſt hear (and of whom he is to learn) in all things; who diſcovers the inward darkneſs in man's mind, and breaks down that in him which is contrary to God, having a daily croſs ready for that which is to be crucified in him, whereby he ſhall die daily to himſelf. And as he dies to himſelf, Chriſt will reveal himſelf more and more in him, and he ſhall feel the pure ſeed of life ſpringing more and more up in him, and living in him, and he in it; in and through which he ſhall come more and more into union and fellowſhip with the Father of ſpirits, and the whole living body of his church and people.

But now, to learn of the Father to come to the Son, and to learn of the Son to know the Father, and to walk in the newneſs of ſpirit before him (and not in an old dead knowledge and fleſhly underſtanding), theſe are great myſteries, which none can learn by a literal conception and comprehenſion of things, but as they are quickened, and their minds and underſtandings opened and kept open by the Lord. Therefore this is the great ſkill and true wiſdom, to know the Shepherd and his voice; and his manner of appearing, and to what he appears; which is to his own ſheep, to

the true birth. And his way and manner of appearing to that birth, is by viſiting and reaching to it by his power opening it, thereby giving it to ſee, hear, and underſtand; but ſhutting up himſelf from the contrary nature, wiſdom, and ſpirit in all men.

There is ſomewhat which maketh a fair ſhew in the fleſhly part, as if it were of God; but God knoweth what and who are his. Now it is for the true children, that the milk of the word, and the bread of life is; and them the Lord is ſtill gracious to, and heareth all the deſires and breatheings of their hearts; them he preſerveth and viſiteth in Egypt, and alſo bringeth out thence. Them he leadeth through the wilderneſs, dividing the Red-Sea before them; before them alſo he divideth Jordan (the river of judgment), cauſing them to paſs through it alſo, that they may enter into the Holy Land. And their lot he defendeth in the Holy Land, in their ſubjection to the Spirit and law of life which rules there. But the contrary birth falleth ſhort by the way, and cannot enter into, nor abide in, that which is pure and living of God.

Now in the lowly ſeed the whole myſtery of life is learned, by thoſe that come thither, and wait there, growing up into him who is the head; but no leſſon of life, and of the truth as it is in Jeſus, is learned out of it. Oh! how careful had men need be to know this ſeed in themſelves, and to witneſs its daily ſpringing up and growth in them.

XI.

Concerning Separation from the Spirit and Ways of the World.

THERE is a neceſſity of ſeparation from the ſpirit, ways, and worſhips of the world, by thoſe that will be the Lord's people. The Jews outward were to be a ſeparated people from all other people (from their gods, from their worſhips) if they would enjoy the favour of the Lord, and the bleſſings of the good land. God had ſeparated them from all other nations, and they were not to mingle with them; neither in their worſhip, nor marriages, *&c.* So the Jews inward, who are God's gathering of ſpiritual worſhippers, out of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, are to be a ſeparated and holy people to the Lord. For when God caſt off the Jews, he ſought out worſhippers in their ſtead, even for a ſpiritual nation and holy people of inward Jews, inſtead of that outward people, outward place of worſhip, and outward land, which he caſt off. Now thoſe whom God ſeeks to be the new, inward, and ſpiritual worſhippers (inſtead of the literal and outward) muſt come out of all other ways and gatherings, upon the many mountains, to the mountain of the Lord's houſe, and to the place of his gathering: the command is expreſs, *Come out from among them, and be ye ſeperate; and touch not the unclean thing, and I will*

receive you, &c. 2 *Cor.* vi. It is true, I ſeek you for worſhippers, and I call you to the goſpel-feaſt of fat things, and I will receive you if ye come; but ye muſt firſt come out from among all the falſe ways and falſe worſhippers, and depart from (and not ſo much as touch) that which is unclean (the unclean ſpirit, his unclean ways and worſhippers) and then I will receive you, and own you as my ſons and daughters, and be a Father to you; not elſe. Mark now; The Jews outward (in their day) muſt be ſeparate from all the Heathen outward, if they would be judged and owned by God for true worſhippers according to the law. The primitive Chriſtians were to ſeparate from both Heathen and Jews too (even their temple, prieſts, and ordinances, which were once of God) if they would be worſhippers, true worſhippers under the goſpel, worſhippers of God's ſeeking. And the Chriſtians, after the antichriſtian corruption and darkneſs, muſt come out of Babylon; that is, out of all forms of religion, and buildings out of the life and power (for that is Babylon, the city of confuſion, which is built, ſtands out of, and practiſeth out of, the order and unity of the Spirit), if they will be found worſhippers in the day of reſtoration; after the long darkneſs of the apoſtaſy, they muſt not worſhip the beaſt (nor worſhip God, as the beaſt teacheth and requireth; for in ſo worſhipping, God is not worſhipped, but the beaſt) nor bear his name, nor receive his mark, either on their forehead or right hand, nor be of the number of his name. Now the command is as expreſs to come out of Babylon; that is, to ſeparate from all antichriſtian ways and worſhips; as ever it was to ſeparate from the Heathen and Jews; and there is no being a true worſhipper in God's ſight, but in the true way of ſeparation from all falſe worſhippers, who worſhip in forms and appearances of godlineſs, out of the life and power.

Now, oh! how precious it is to feel God's ſeeking, God's gathering, God's ſeparating, God's teaching, leading, drawing into the truth, and true way of worſhip! For there are ſelf-ſeparations, which are out of the true Spirit, life and power. Yea, God may begin the ſeparation, and another wiſdom may ſtep in, and carry it on, out of the limits of the ſweet, innocent Spirit, life and power. Oh! bleſſed is he who is ſeparated by the Lord from all that is not of him! But he that is but ſenſual, and hath not the Spirit, but only by a literal knowledge ſeparateth himſelf, he differeth from others but in the outward form and appearance of godlineſs; but is one in nature and ground with thoſe whom he ſeparateth from. Thus the Papiſts, and all pretended Chriſtians (of the ſame ſpirit) who feel not the true Spirit, power, and life, are but one in the ground, how great ſoever their difference outwardly ſeem. And thoſe that ſeparate further and further (even to the utmoſt extent outwardly, or in way of appearance) being not ſeparated by the Lord from that nature and ſpirit wherein the enmity lodgeth, they are ſtill inhabitants of one and the ſame city (for the city of

Babylon

Babylon is very large) and daughters of one and the ſame mother, even of the wiſdom which is from beneath; which wiſdom, in its higheſt exaltation, is far beneath the nature and true excellency of the pure and heavenly wiſdom, even in its loweſt and moſt contemptible appearance. Oh! bleſſed is the religion, the worſhip, the ſeparation, the fear of the Moſt High God, the faith, the knowledge, which begins in the Spirit and power (even in the evidence and demonſtration of God's own Spirit), and which ſtands and abides therein! For herein are the children of light diſtinguiſhed, and kept diſtinct (by God Almighty, who hath made the difference) from all the children of darkneſs.

1671,
About the 12th month.

By ISAAC PENINGTON,

Priſoner for the teſtimony of truth at Reading-gaol.

A TREA

ALIA

A

TREATISE

CONCERNING

GOD's TEACHINGS,

AND

CHRIST's LAW.

With ſome other THINGS of

WEIGHTY IMPORTANCE

Particularly mentioned after the PREFACE.

Written by

ISAAC PENINGTON.

Priſoner at READING-GAOL for the Teſtimony of Truth.

They alſo that erred in ſpirit ſhall know underſtanding, and they that murmured ſhall learn doctrine. ISA. xxix. 24. Bleſſed be the LORD, it is ſo. This Prophecy is ſenſibly and experimentally fulfilled, and fulfilling daily more and more.

THE PREFACE.

CHRIST, who came from the Father, and knew the way of truth and life everlaſting, and was to guide men to the Father, being the only way unto him, preached the kingdom, and bid men ſeek the kingdom; teaching and inſtructing them in many parables concerning it, and directing them where and how to find it.

The apoſtles likewiſe (who ſucceeded Chriſt in the ſame Spirit and power wherein he miniſtered) preached the ſame kingdom, declaring and deſcribing what it was, and wherein it conſiſted; namely, not in word, but in power (even in the power which ſhakes all that is to be ſhaken, but cannot be ſhaken itſelf, nor the kingdom which is in it, 1 *Cor.* iii. 20. and *Heb.* xii. 28.) Nor was the kingdom of God meat and drink (or any outward thing); but righteouſneſs, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghoſt, *Rom.* xiv. 17.

And they preached not in vain; for the life was inwardly revealed in many, the power inwardly revealed, and the righteouſneſs, peace, and joy thereof felt. For ſuch as truly believed and obeyed the goſpel, received the kingdom which could never be ſhaken, and had an entrance miniſtered to them thereinto, according to their diligence and carefulneſs in the truth.

Now afterwards a great darkneſs came over, and this glorious kingdom was again veiled, and the kingdom of darkneſs and deceit overſpread the profeſſors of Chriſtianity; and in this time notions and outward knowledges took with men, inſtead of the life and truth itſelf, wherein the kingdom and power ſtands.

But, bleſſed be the Lord, the light of life again ſhines out of and over the darkneſs, and the kingdom is again received, and the entrance into it again known; and from what is ſeen and heard (and in meaſure enjoyed and poſſeſſed) is a faithful teſtimony given forth. And bleſſed are they who hear the joyful ſound; for it is no leſs than the ſound of life itſelf, the power itſelf, the goſpel itſelf, the Spirit himſelf, manifeſting himſelf in, and ſpeaking through, veſſels according to his pleaſure.

Now they that receive this light, which is teſtified of, and witneſſed to, receive Chriſt; but they that deſpiſe and reject it, reject him; as will be made manifeſt in the day of the Lord, whatever men, in their wiſdom and comprehenſions, judge to the contrary, who know not, nor are able to judge of the appearances of the Lord, or of the glory of this diſpenſation.

For this diſpenſation is indeed moſt precious, glorious, and living, being a diſpenſation of the ſeed and power of life itſelf, whereby God tranſlateth out of darkneſs, and the regions thereof, into the kingdom of his dear Son, and into his glorious image. Which, reader, not that thou mayeſt have only notions concerning, but mayeſt really come to partake of, is the end of my giving forth theſe things following; which ſweetly, freſhly, livingly, and powerfully ſprang up in my heart for thy ſake, and are in great love preſented to thy view,

By a ſufferer for the truth which lives in him, and in which he lives, through the tender mercy of the Lord, and to the glory of the riches of his grace,

ISAAC PENINGTON.

A

TREATISE

CONCERNING

God's Teachings, and Christ's Law, &c.

I.

Concerning God's Teachings.

It is written in the prophets (ſaid Chriſt) *they ſhall be all taught of God. Every one therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me,* John vi. 45. *For the prophets indeed had ſaid, All thy children ſhall be taught of the Lord, and they ſhall all know me, from the leaſt of them to the greateſt of them.*

NOW whoſe children are they which ſhall all be taught of the Lord? And which are they which ſhall all know the Lord by the teachings of his Spirit, from the leaſt to the greateſt? Are they not the children of the free woman, the children of the Jeruſalem which is from above, which is the mother of all that are truly living? Now all her children the Father of life begets, and taketh care to teach them the true, pure, heavenly, living knowledge; ſo that they indeed know the Lord, being taught by the anointing ſo to do; and they indeed know Chriſt, the Father revealing him to them: for none knows the Father but the Son, and none knows the Son but the Father, and he to whom the Father reveals him. *Fleſh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father which is in heaven* (ſaid Chriſt to Peter, *Matt.* xvi. 17.) And it pleaſed God to reveal his Son in me, ſaid Paul, *Gal.* i. 15, 16. And how did Paul preach Chriſt among the Gentiles? Did he not preach him as a myſtery hid from ages and generations, which none but the Father could reveal and make manifeſt? And when he

he is known and made manifeſt, is he not known within, revealed within, made manifeſt within? *Col.* i. 26, 27. and 1 *John* i. 2. Mark: *The life was manifeſted.* Thus they came to know Chriſt; and if they would bring others to the knowledge of Chriſt, they muſt bring others to the manifeſtation of the ſame life, and ſhew unto them that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifeſted unto them, *ver.* 2. Now that they might do thus, they were to preach the light to them (even this meſſage, that God is light, and in him is no darkneſs at all, *ver.* 5.) and to turn them to the light (*Acts* xxvi. 18.) in which alone men can ſee and receive the life which is eternal. Men may know or comprehend many things concerning the Meſſiah from the letter; but they can only know the Meſſiah himſelf in the light which ſhines into their hearts, and which he ſent his apoſtles to direct and turn their minds to. For they directed them to the Word within, light within, life within, Spirit within; to feel after the manifeſtation of God within, which was communicated to the very Gentiles, *Rom.* i. 17. And ſo Paul directed the Gentiles to ſeek after and find God nigh, and not afar off, *Acts* xvii. 27. Oh! this is precious to find and feel God near, Chriſt near; in his light to ſee light, in his life to feel and enjoy life! For here (in the place of darkneſs, in the place of ſin and death, in the place where dragons lay, *Iſa.* xxxv, 7.) is the redeeming power to be felt, and the deliverance of the ſoul experienced by thoſe that truly believe.

The Scribes and Phariſees had a knowledge that the Meſſiah was to come; but how came they by it? Why they had read ſo in the letter of the ſcriptures. The profeſſors of this age have a knowledge that Chriſt is come; how came they by that? Why they have read ſo in the writings of the evangeliſts and apoſtles. But who hath believed the report of life now, and to whom is the arm of the Lord (which is now ſtretched forth) revealed? Who hath heard and learned of the Father to know the Son, and ſo to come to him, even from the inward revelation of his Spirit, and from the inward living knowledge which is thereby? *Every one therefore* (ſaith Chriſt) every one of theſe children, every one that is taught of God (becauſe of what they have heard and learned of the Father) cometh to the Son. Now every one that is thus drawn, and thus cometh, Chriſt receiveth, and giveth to all ſuch eternal life; and they know him who giveth them eternal life, and who preſerveth and maintaineth life in them. Others have but a notional knowledge of him; but do not indeed know him that is true, nor are in him that is true, even in his Son Jeſus Chriſt, who is the very God and life eternal, 1 *John* v. 20.

And ſo they that are taught of God, learn of him to repent from dead works, and do repent them thereof; whereas others, through hardneſs of heart, do not ſo much as diſcern which are dead works, which not, in matters of worſhip. Others do not know the true difference between that which is dead and that which is living; but death (unknown to them) lives and reigns in their very knowledge and apprehenſions of things; even in

their faith, in their duties, yea, in all they believe and perform to God. For as Paul was alive without the law once, even when he walked according to the letter of the law blameleſs; ſo all ſorts are now dead, in the midſt of all their knowledges and practices from the letter (how much alive ſoever they may ſeem to themſelves therein) till they come to the miniſtration of the Spirit. For the letter killeth; but the Spirit quickeneth, or giveth life, 2 *Cor.* iii. 6. and *ver.* 3. This therefore is the work of a true miniſter, to beget into the Spirit, and into the life; but ah! how little do men know what dead works are, and what it is truly to witneſs repentance from them! Men out of God's Spirit, light, and power, are ſo far from repenting for them, that they do not ſo much as rightly diſtinguiſh and diſcern them; but take that for living which is dead; kindling a fire of themſelves, and compaſſing themſelves about with ſparks, thinking the warmth thereof to be the true warmth. Now if men are not come to the true repentance from dead works, much leſs are they come to the true faith towards God; and ſo are yet in their ſins, yet out of Chriſt, having never learned of the Father to come to him; and ſo are ſtill in Egypt's ſpirit, in Egypt's wiſdom, and in that hold their religion: and whenever God appears in his Spirit and power, he will not be that to them which they expect; but a dreadful ſtroke from him will come upon all their ways and worſhips, which are as abominable to God as they are pleaſing to them. But alas! to what end are words to that ear, to that ſpirit, which is like the deaf adder, which will not hearken to the voice of the charmer, charm he ever ſo wiſely! Could the letter-learned Scribes and Phariſees hear the voice of Chriſt in the days of his fleſh? Nay; they could not, in that gain-ſaying ſpirit. Can the letter-learned profeſſors, in the ſame ſpirit, hear the voice of Chriſt's Spirit now? Nay; they cannot. And they that cannot hear the voice of the ſecond Adam, the voice of the quickening Spirit, the voice of him who gives life to the ſoul, how can they live? And if they firſt receive not life from Chriſt, how can they perform any living action to God? How can they worſhip in the Spirit and in the living truth, who are not gathered into the Spirit and into the living truth? Oh! that men could conſider aright of theſe things, and wait on the Lord for the true underſtanding of them! For without the true knowledge of God and Chriſt (without that knowledge which is life eternal) men muſt needs periſh. It cannot be otherwiſe; for the true knowledge only ſaves, and therefore they which have it not muſt needs periſh.

II.

Concerning the Law of Chriſt.

And the iſles ſhall wait for his law, Iſa. xlii. 4.

WHAT is that law which the iſles were and are to wait for? Is it not the grace and truth which comes by Jeſus Chriſt, even the grace in the inward parts, the truth in the inward parts? The law outward was given by Moſes to the outward Jews; but grace and truth comes by Jeſus Chriſt. That is the law of the Jew inward, which the iſles of the Gentiles were to wait for.

The apoſtle holdeth forth Chriſt to be the ſoul's maſter (he is the Shepherd, Lord, King, and Biſhop of the ſoul), to whom every one muſt give an account. Now what muſt men give an account to him of? Is it not of the grace and truth which comes by him? If any man hath received that, obeyed that, believing the ſound, report, and voice of that, and ſo loved and followed it, will it not be ſaid unto him, *Well done, good and faithful ſervant?* But if any one hath neglected and deſpiſed the grace (not improving the talent, but improving his own natural abilities, while God's talent lay wrapped up in a napkin, and hid in the earth) will not that perſon be judged a ſlothful ſervant as to improving the talent, whatever he hath been as to improving his own natural parts and abilities?

Now mind: If Chriſt be an inward, a ſpiritual maſter, what is his law but the inward teachings of his Spirit? A prophet ſhall the Lord your God raiſe up unto you like unto me, him ſhall ye hear in all things; and he that will not hear him, how ſecure and confident ſoever he may ſeem to himſelf of his ſtate at preſent; yet it ſhall come to paſs that he ſhall be cut off and deſtroyed from among God's people. Are not the words, the voice, the motions, the leadings, the drawings, the commands of his Spirit, the law to all that are ſpiritual? Doth he not ſay to one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; to another, Do this, and he doth it? Here is the glory of the great Lord and King, and of the great High-prieſt, over the houſhold of God, in that he giveth forth precepts according to his holy will and pleaſure; and all his ſheep know his voice, and follow him; and all his children and ſervants obſerve and obey him.

If we live in the Spirit, let us alſo walk in the Spirit, ſaid the holy apoſtle. Here are the limits of the children of the new covenant; here is the law of life (the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus), the law of the new covenant, written in the heart, which none can read but with the new eye. The children of the fleſh may read the letter, and comprehend concerning the letter, and gather rules and obſervations out of the letter; but the children of the new covenant alone can read the law of life in the heart. And

this

this law is the path of life, the path of all that are renewed by God's Spirit, which the Jew inward is to read diligently, and to have his delight therein, and to meditate thereon day and night. And this law is light, true light, pure light, ſpiritual light, yea, the light which is eternal, and never varies; and the commandment which comes therefrom is a lamp, which they that receive know it to be no leſs than life everlaſting; for indeed the commandments of Chriſt's Spirit are felt to be ſo. Now this commandment, this law, this light, ſhines in the darkneſs at firſt; but afterwards out of the darkneſs more and more (as it is believed, received, obeyed, and walked in) unto the perfect day; ſee *Prov.* iv. 18, 19.

Queſt. But how may I wait for, come to know, and receive this law? I am not of the ſtock of the Jews natural, but of the iſles of the Gentiles; how may I meet with and receive the law of life from Chriſt, or the grace and truth which comes by him?

Anſw. The way of receiving it, is to mind that which enlightens and renews the mind, drawing it out of the nature and ſpirit of this world, and out of the ways, worſhips, knowledge, and cuſtoms thereof, into that which ſeaſons it otherwiſe, and opens it another way. Now here the grace is met with, here the truth is met with, here the Spirit of life is met with; here the inward change is felt, and the new law written in the heart and ſpirit. And here the mind comes to prove and know what is that good, that acceptable and perfect will of God: for God is the teacher in the new covenant, and his teachings are here, even in that which he renews. He gathereth into his Spirit, and he teacheth thoſe that abide in his Spirit, and giveth unto them eternal life, eternal virtue, eternal nouriſhment, in and from his Spirit. But they that may be great ſearchers into the letter, and comprehenders from the letter, and practiſers according to their apprehenſions of the letter (not being gathered into nor reading in the Spirit) they miſs of eternal life, and of the redeeming arm and power, and are not ſaved from ſin by the blood of Chriſt; but are yet in tranſgreſſion, darkneſs, and death, even until now. The Lord, who knoweth all things, make manifeſt their eſtates and conditions unto them, that they periſh not for ever; but may learn of the Father to know the Son, and of the Son to know the Father, and come to witneſs true life manifeſted in their own hearts, that they may have fellowſhip with the Father and Son therein. For he that is not turned from darkneſs unto light (from the darkneſs within in his own heart, unto the light which God cauſeth to ſhine there) doth not yet know Chriſt livingly and ſavingly; but is only in the notions and comprehenſions concerning him, which cannot ſave. For it is the life and power of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, inwardly revealed againſt the power of ſin and death, which is alone able to ſave therefrom.

Now conſider with yourſelves (all who would not be deceived in this matter) have ye known this law? Have ye received it in meaſure, and do ye wait to know and receive it daily more and more? Then are ye Chriſtians indeed,

indeed, and of the houſe of Jacob, which walk in the light of the Lord, and in the light of the holy city, whoſe light the Lamb is. But without this law, without this light, without the inward writing of God's Spirit in your hearts, ye cannot be inward Jews, nor children of the new covenant.

Theſe are weighty things, and to be conſidered weightily, and weighed in the balance of the ſanctuary. Oh! wait to know what it is to go into the ſanctuary, and to weigh things there in the balance thereof, which exactly and infallibly weigheth and determineth whatever is brought thither! For of a truth ye cannot underſtand any ſcripture aright which treateth of any ſpiritual and heavenly myſtery, but as ye are taught of God, to bring it unto the balance of the ſanctuary, and to weigh it there; where all your own apprehenſions, meanings, and conceptions will fall, and the mind and intent of God's Spirit be alone owned and juſtified. Ah! what a vaſt difference there is between weighing mens apprehenſions and conceivings upon ſcriptures in the balance of their own underſtandings, and weighing them in the true balance! In the former are all the erring judgments; but in the latter is the true, unerring judgment of God's own Spirit, in the light which is eternal; which judgment will ſtand for ever.

III.

A brief Relation concerning myſelf, in reference to what has befallen me in my Purſuit after Truth.

I Was acquainted with a ſpring of life from my childhood, which enlightened me in my tender years, and pointed my heart towards the Lord, begetting true ſenſe in me, and faith, and hope, and love, and humility, and meekneſs, *&c.* ſo that indeed I was a wonder to ſome that knew me, becauſe of the ſavour and life of religion which dwelt in my heart, and appeared in my converſation.

But I never durſt truſt the ſpring of my life, and the ſpringings up of life therefrom; but, in reading the ſcriptures, gathered what knowledge I could therefrom, and ſet this over the ſpring and ſpringings of life in me, and indeed judged that I ought ſo to do.

Notwithſtanding which, the Lord was very tender and merciful to me, helping me to pray, and helping me to underſtand the ſcriptures, and opening and warming my heart every day.

And truly my ſoul was very near the Lord, and my heart was made and preſerved very low and humble before him, and very ſenſible of his rich love and mercy to me in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; as I did daily from my heart cry grace, grace, unto him, in every thing my ſoul received and partook of from him.

Indeed I did not look to have been ſo broken, ſhattered, and diſtreſſed, as I afterwards was, and could by no means underſtand the meaning thereof

of, my heart truly and earneſtly deſiring after the Lord, and not having the ſenſe of any guilt upon me. Divers came to ſee me, ſome to enquire into, and conſider of, my condition; others to bewail it, and (if poſſible) adminiſter ſome relief, help, and comfort to me; and divers were the judgments they had concerning me. Some would ſay it was deep melancholy; others would narrowly ſearch, and enquire how, and in what manner, and in what way I had walked; and were jealous that I had ſinned againſt the Lord, and provoked him ſome way or other, and that ſome iniquity lay as a load upon me: but, after thorough converſe with me, they would ſtill expreſs that they were of another mind; and that the hand of the Lord was in it, and it was an eminent caſe, and would end in good to my ſoul.

At that time, when I was broken and daſhed to pieces in my religion, I was in a congregational way; but ſoon after parted with them, yet in great love, relating to them how the hand of the Lord was upon me, and how I was ſmitten in the inward part of my religion, and could not now hold up an outward form of that which I inwardly wanted, having loſt my God, my Chriſt, my faith, my knowledge, my life, my all. And ſo we parted very lovingly, I wiſhing them well, even the preſence of that God whom I wanted; promiſing to return to them again, if ever I met with that which my ſoul wanted, and had clearneſs in the Lord ſo to do.

After I was parted from them, I never joined to any way or people; but lay mourning day and night, pleading with the Lord why he had forſaken me, and why I ſhould be made ſo miſerable through my love to him, and ſincere deſires after him. For truly I can ſay, I had not been capable of ſo much miſery as my ſoul lay in for many years, had not my love been ſo deep and true towards the Lord my God, and my deſires ſo great after the ſenſible enjoyment of his Spirit, according to the promiſe and way of the goſpel. Yet this I can alſo ſay, in uprightneſs of heart, It was not gifts I deſired to appear and ſhine before men in; but grace and holineſs, and the Spirit of the Lord dwelling in me, to act my heart by his grace, and to preſerve me in holineſs.

Now indeed the Lord at length had compaſſion on me, and viſited me; though in a time and way wherein I expected him not: nor was I willing (as to the natural part) to have that the way which God ſhewed me to be the way; but the Lord opened my eye, and that which I know to be of him in me cloſed with it, and owned it; and the pure ſeed was raiſed by his power, and my heart taught to know and own the ſeed, and to bow and worſhip before the Lord in the pure power, which was then in my heart. So that of a truth I ſenſibly knew and felt my Saviour, and was taught by him to take up the croſs, and to deny that underſtanding, knowledge, and wiſdom, which had ſo long ſtood in my way; and then I learned that leſſon (being really taught it of the Lord) what it is indeed to become a fool for Chriſt's ſake. I cannot ſay but I had learned ſomewhat of it formerly; but I never knew how to keep to what I had learned till that day.

And

And then God ſhewed me (by degrees, as he nurtured me up in the heavenly ſenſe and experience of his Spirit) the workings of the good in me, and the workings of the ſubtilty; and how himſelf had, in time paſt, taught me to pray, and to underſtand the ſcriptures, and to believe in his Son, and know ſome things aright; but withal, how a knowledge and underſtanding of another nature had crept in, and gained ground upon me (which indeed I knew not how to diſtinguiſh thoroughly from the other, and watch againſt), and ſo the truth came not to live in me, nor I to live in that, according to the utmoſt deſire and travail of my ſoul.

But now of a truth, by this bleſſed viſitation of the everlaſting goſpel, the Lord hath at length brought me back to the ſame ſpring I was acquainted with at firſt, and joined my heart in true ſenſe and underſtanding to it; ſo that the life that I live is by the ſpringing up of life in me; and I know the Lord my God, by being daily taught by him ſo to do; and I love him, by feeling my heart circumciſed and conſtrained through the new nature thereunto. And truly it is natural to the good ſeed in me, and to my ſoul in and through the ſame, to truſt my Father, and to ſuffer any thing that he requires of me, who freely giveth me both to do and to ſuffer: for indeed I live not of myſelf, but by a continual gift and quickening of life in my heart.

And oh! that others alſo could come to hear the teſtimony of truth and life from God's Holy Spirit, and be turned thereby to the pure principle and Spirit of life itſelf (which many formerly had a true taſte of, but are now turned aſide to another nature and ſpirit, though they themſelves know it not), that they might witneſs the goſpel-power, and know the ſpiritual and heavenly Jeruſalem, and ſuck at her breaſts, and be dandled on her knee, who is the mother and bringer-up of all that are truly living.

IV.

A Queſtion about preaching the everlaſting Goſpel anſwered.

Queſt. HOW is the everlaſting goſpel (wherein Chriſt is truly made known, and ſalvation really witneſſed in the hearts of thoſe that receive it) preached at this day? How hath the Lord appointed it to be preached, and how is it preached, and how may men come to hear it, that their ſouls may live? Are not they bleſſed that hear the joyful ſound thereof? Are not they wretched and miſerable, and blind and naked, who miſtake and miſs concerning that ſound of it, which it pleaſeth the Spirit of the Lord to give forth in this day?

It is wonderful to conſider how the truth, the goſpel, the life, the power which ſaves, is one and the ſame in all ages and generations, and yet ſtill hid from the wiſe, prudent, profeſſing eye, in every age and generation.

Now let me ſpeak a few words to this thing; not only from what I have felt in my heart, but have alſo read in the ſcriptures of truth.

Anſw. The goſpel, after the apoſtaſy, is thus to be preached: *Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worſhip him that made heaven and earth*, &c. *Rev.* xiv. 6, 7. He that knoweth the preacher that preacheth this; he that hath heard this preached in his own heart; he that hath met with that fear which God's Spirit teacheth and giveth; he that hath known the hour of God's judgment, and had the axe laid to the root of the corrupt tree, and hath been taught by the Son to worſhip the Father in Spirit and Truth; he hath without doubt met with the goſpel, the everlaſting goſpel: and if God require of ſuch an one, and aſſiſt him by his Spirit and power to preach this to others, he is a preacher of the everlaſting goſpel, and an able miniſter of the New Teſtament, not of the letter, but of the Spirit. But all ſhould take heed of preaching their own formings and conceivings upon the letter (as too many do in this day, who reproach, revile, and perſecute the life and power), for that falls ſhort of true preaching the letter.

Oh! that theſe things were weighty upon mens ſpirits, that they might learn aright to ſearch and underſtand the ſcriptures, and know how the Father hath revealed the Son in this day, and how to come to him, to receive life from him! For many (who ſeem knowing) through ignorance, miſtake in this matter, and ſo run on in their own wills, wiſdoms, and comprehenſion of things, and miſs of the drawings of the Father, and ſo come not aright to the Son; but only according to what they themſelves imagine and apprehend from what they have gathered and conceived upon the ſcriptures.

God, who commanded light to ſhine in this outward world, hath judged it neceſſary to cauſe the light of his Spirit to ſhine inwardly in mens hearts; and this gives the knowledge of the ſcriptures, and the true ſenſe and diſcerning of inward and ſpiritual things; yea, here the Son is known, and his blood felt cleanſing; which the ſcriptures without do not make manifeſt; but this the ſcriptures are a clear and faithful record of, and teſtimony to. Men had need take heed how they read, and how they underſtand, the ſcriptures (in what light, in what ſpirit), for it is eaſy erring; but without the preſence and guidance of God herein, men cannot walk ſafely. And truly it is great preſumption in any man to read the ſcriptures boldly, without fear and reverence to him who is the author of them; or to put any of his meanings and conceivings upon God's words; which it is hard for him to forbear doing, who readeth them in the liberty of his own ſpirit, out of the light of God's Spirit, which is the limit and yoke of the true readers and underſtanders of the ſcriptures.

V.

Concerning Chriſt's Miniſtry, or Prieſthood.

CHRIST is made by God a miniſter, or high-prieſt, over the ſpiritual Iſrael of God. *Not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endleſs life* (as *Heb.* vii, 16. and *chap.* viii. 2.); and he miniſters with his Spirit and power unto and in all his. So that he that knows Chriſt's miniſtry, knows the power, the life, the Spirit in which he miniſters; but he that is not acquainted with theſe, is yet to learn to know Chriſt aright, and to believe in him unto life and ſalvation, which are wrapped up, comprehended, revealed, and communicated in the power wherewith he miniſters. For the very beginning of Chriſt's miniſtry is in the Spirit and power of God, whereby he redeems out of the Spirit and power of Satan; and to this men are to be turned, if they will witneſs ſalvation by Jeſus Chriſt, even to the light and power of God's Holy Spirit, which breaks the darkneſs and ſtrength of the kingdom of Satan in the heart. For indeed all literal profeſſions, beliefs, knowledges, and practices, out of the life and power, Satan can transform himſelf into, and uphold and maintain his kingdom under, in the hearts of men; but the inward light and power of life breaks it, where the minds of people are by the Spirit of the Lord turned thereto, and ſubjected under its rule and government.

VI.

Concerning the true Knowledge of Chriſt.

IT was ſaid, in the time of the prophets, under the miniſtration of the law, that *the prieſt's lips ſhould keep knowledge, and they* (that is, the outward Iſrael, Iſrael after the fleſh) *ſhould ſeek the law at his mouth; for he is the meſſenger of the Lord of hoſts*, Mal. i. 7. And doth not Chriſt, our High-prieſt, and the Apoſtle of our profeſſion, keep all the people's knowledge? And are they not all to ſeek the law of life, the law of the new covenant, at his mouth? Is not he the meſſenger of the covenant, who brings tidings of the covenant of life and peace; and muſt not the ſoul that will live hear him? *Iſa.* lv. 1, 2, 3. Is not he the ſealed and Sent-One of the Father, to open the blind eye, and to bring the priſoner out of the pit? Is not he the Shepherd of the ſpiritual flock? And are not ſuch as are called out of the world (and ſanctified by him) his ſheep? And are not all his ſheep to hear his voice, and follow him? Is not he the prophet, like Moſes, appointed by God, for all the ſpiritual Iſrael to hear in all things? (Is not his Spirit to teach and lead into all truth? Can any elſe lead into truth; or can any come into truth unleſs they be led?) And they that will not hear the voice

of his Spirit in theſe latter days (ſeeing God, in theſe laſt days, ſpeaketh by his Son, and ſaith to all the true diſciples and followers of the Lamb, *Hear ye him*); are they not to be cut off from the comforts of his Spirit, from the pure refreſhments of his Spirit, from the life of his Spirit, and from the living Iſrael, and ſo to be numbered among the dead and unredeemed?

Chriſt ſaith, *I am the way, the truth, and the life.* It is he alone that is the living way, which leads to the Father. Now how is Chriſt the way to the Father? How is he the truth? How is he the life? Is he ſo by any literal and outward knowledge of him; or by the inward, ſpiritual, and living knowledge of him? They that know his Spirit, know the way; and they that walk in his Spirit, walk in the way. This is moſt certain: they that walk not in the oldneſs of the letter, but in the newneſs and life of the Spirit, they walk in the new and living way. How is the letter old; and how is the Spirit new? How is Chriſt known after the fleſh, and ſo to be known no more? And how is he known after the Spirit, and ſo to be known for ever? Man is but fleſh, and his knowledge and underſtanding of things, of his own fetching from the literal relation and deſcriptions of them, is but the knowledge of the fleſhly part; but there is a new eye, a new underſtanding, a new heart and mind, to which the Father reveals him; and that knowledge which the new-birth receives of the Father, that is ſpiritual, true, pure, heavenly, living knowledge. And ſo the children of the kingdom are to dwell in that light wherein the Father reveals the things of the kingdom; and this differenceth them from all the literal knowers of the things of God upon the face of the earth. Now this is it which ſatisfieth my heart concerning my knowledge of the things of God, even that I have ſo learned to know Chriſt, and to believe in him (and to repent from dead works, and to obey him, and ſuffer for him) as I could never have learned, unleſs the Father himſelf had taught me. And now ſeeing and partaking of the difference, I cannot but teſtify againſt all dead teachings, unto the Spirit's teaching, which is living; knowing aſſuredly, that no other teaching or learning the things of God will amount to true knowledge, or be owned in the day of the Lord, but that which is of and in the Spirit.

VII.

A few Words more concerning the Right Way of Knowing, as it is witneſſed unto in the Scriptures, and experienced in the Hearts of thoſe that truly and livingly know the Lord.

WISDOM *is juſtified of her children*, ſaid Chriſt, *Matt.* xi. 19. Now, who is wiſdom? What is wiſdom? Is it not the heavenly mother of all the living? It is the Spirit which begets all, who are truly begotten to the Lord? Now where, and into what, doth he beget them? In the earthly nature, in the earthly wiſdom, in the earthly ſpirit, or out of it; in and into that which is heavenly.

Now all that are of this heavenly begetting and birth, they know (own and juſtify) that wiſdom, wherein they are begotten. They juſtify the nature of truth, the light of truth, the life of truth, the power of truth, the appearance of truth in their age and generation. The falſe birth will own and juſtify the words of truth which were formerly ſpoken, and the former apppearances thereof (as the Scribes and Phariſees did Moſes and the prophets, who denied Chriſt, who was truth, and ſpake truth beyond them); but the true birth knoweth and juſtifieth the preſent words, and the preſent appearances of truth, which the falſe birth ſtill ſlighteth and deſpiſeth.

If any man therefore will judge aright concerning the things of God, he muſt be ſure to be of the true birth (a child of the true wiſdom) and that he keep to that nature, Spirit, and birth, to which God giveth the diſcerning. For there is an eye of diſcerning, and a way of diſcerning, which is a gift; and he that will know aright, and judge aright, muſt keep to the gift of light, the gift of grace, the gift of the Spirit, the gift of the holy anointing; and be watchful and careful to judge in it, and take heed of judging out of it. For though a man be come to a ſpiritual ſtate, and hath received the gift of grace, knowledge, and diſcerning; yet if he be not watchful to keep to the gift, he may eaſily err, and judge amiſs.

VIII.

Concerning Chriſt's Righteouſneſs, which is the Righteouſneſs of all his Saints.

CHRIST is the head, his ſaints the body; and do they not all partake of one nature, one Spirit, one virtue, one life, one righteouſneſs? Doth not Chriſt give them of his own righteouſneſs, even of the righteouſneſs which his Father gave him? And is not that righteouſneſs which Chriſt giveth them, their righteouſneſs? What was Chriſt's righteouſneſs? Was it not the righteouſneſs of God revealed in him, communicated to him, and made his? And what is their righteouſneſs? Is not the ſame righteouſneſs

ouſneſs revealed in them, communicated to them, and made theirs, in and by Chriſt? Are not they made partakers of the divine nature, in and thro' him, and made the righteouſneſs of God in him? Chriſt truſted his Father, and obeyed his Father in all things. Now was not that an effect of the righteous nature and Spirit of his Father in him? *He became obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs.* And, Oh! how was his Father pleaſed therewith! Did not he ſay to him, as to Abraham in the like caſe? *Becauſe thou haſt done this thing, in bleſſing I will bleſs thee; and in multiplying I will multiply thy ſeed; and thou ſhalt ſee of the travail of thy ſoul, and be ſatisfied:* for thou ſhalt not only gather the *diſperſed of Iſrael*, but *inherit the Gentiles* alſo; *and have the uttermoſt parts of the earth for thy poſſeſſion.*

Conſider now ſeriouſly, in God's fear; Is Chriſt's obedience to the law of Moſes the ſaints evangelical righteouſneſs? Or is his righteouſneſs revealed in them, from faith to faith? Was his being circumciſed outwardly, their circumciſion? Or is his inward circumciſing them, their circumciſion? Which of theſe is the goſpel circumciſion; the circumciſing of his fleſh outwardly, or the circumciſing of their hearts inwardly? Again, was his being outwardly baptized, their baptiſm? Or is the inward baptiſm of the Spirit, the goſpel-baptiſm? Doth he not fulfill the righteouſneſs of the law of the Spirit of life in them, who believe in his Spirit and power, and walk not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit? Was not Chriſt juſtified in the Spirit? And are not all his juſtified in the Spirit alſo? Whatſoever is of God, whatſoever is wrought in God, doth not God juſtify? Is not the perſon here juſtified, the faith juſtified, the works juſtified with the juſtification of life, and of God's Holy Spirit, from whence they proceed? And here Chriſt's words are verified, *He that doth truth, cometh to the light, that his deeds may be manifeſt, that they are wrought in God*, John iii. 21. And are not his deeds then juſtified? He that is united to the Spirit of God (and acquainted with the Spirit of God, and knows his voice) hears, and ſees, and feels, and underſtands what God condemns, and alſo what he juſtifies; who never condemns any thing that ariſeth from himſelf, and is wrought in himſelf; but only that which cometh from the fleſh, and is wrought in the fleſh. And here he ſees (in the true light) what faith is imputed for righteouſneſs, and what faith is ſhut out; and what works are accounted righteous, and what works are ſhut out: and how Enoch walked with God in the righteous Spirit and life, and was therein juſtified; and how Noah built an ark in the faith, being moved with fear, and was therein with his family ſaved. So Abel ſacrificed in the faith, *By which he obtained witneſs that he was righteous, God teſtifying of his gifts*, Heb. xi. 4. Mark; his ſacrifice, his gift, came from a righteous Spirit, and ſo the righteous God teſtified of his gift; and ſuch are all the ſacrifices now, that are offered up in God's Spirit, and in the true faith. And ſo we alſo ſee how Abraham (the father of the faithful) was *juſtified by works*, James ii. 21. and how God was pleaſed with him, becauſe he had done that thing of offering up his only ſon at God's command.

command. Alſo Phinehas's zeal for the Lord, in executing judgment, was highly eſteemed of the Lord, and *was counted to him for righteouſneſs, unto all generations for evermore*, Pſa. cvi. 30, 31.

But alas! How do men miſtake about the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, about the goſpel-righteouſneſs; and, in effect, make it but the righteouſneſs of the law, but the righteouſneſs of the old covenant, performed in the perſon of another for us, and imputed to us? Whereas it is the righteouſneſs of another covenant, even of the new and living covenant, which the Lord Jeſus Chriſt worketh, both in us and for us. Now whoever receiveth this righteouſneſs from him, and is cloathed with it by him, he findeth it to be the righteouſneſs of the goſpel, the new and living righteouſneſs, the true and everlaſting righteouſneſs, both of the Father and Son, which the ſouls of thoſe that truly believe, partake of in them and with them.

Now conſider a ſcripture or two, to evidence this further.

The apoſtle ſaith, 2 *Cor.* iii. 17, 18. *The Lord is that Spirit* (the Lord Jeſus is the ſecond Adam, the quickening Spirit) in whom the *veil is done away*, ver. 15. And ſo the true Chriſtian (in whom the *veil is done away*, who is come into the true liberty of the Spirit) *with open face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord*, is *changed into the ſame image.*

Now mind: if man be changed into the heavenly image, if he partake of Chriſt's image, is he not made righteous, and become truly righteous therein? Was not the image of the firſt Adam holy and righteous? And is not the image of the ſecond Adam holy and righteous alſo? And are not they that are changed from the image of ſin and Satan, into Chriſt's image, holy and righteous in that image? Are they not changed from unrighteouſneſs to righteouſneſs? And is not this image, whereinto they are changed, and wherein they are new created by God, their righteouſneſs? Whoever is ingrafted into Chriſt, is he not ingrafted into righteouſneſs? Cut off from unrighteouſneſs, and ingrafted into righteouſneſs; even into the righteous nature and Spirit of the Lamb? And doth he not partake of the righteouſneſs of the vine or olive-tree, into which he is ingrafted? And doth not that become his righteouſneſs? If the root be holy, then are alſo the branches; and if the root be righteous, ſo are alſo the branches; and that is the righteouſneſs and holineſs of the branches, which they have from the root.

The other ſcripture is that of *Eph.* iv. 22, 23, 24. which ſpeaks of putting off the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful luſts; and of being renewed in the ſpirit of the mind, and putting on the new man, which after God is created in righteouſneſs and true holineſs. Mark; here is the new creation. Now conſider well, what is the holineſs and righteouſneſs of the new creation? Is not that which is put off, old, corrupt, unholy, unrighteous? Is not that which is put on, new, holy, righteous; even the image before ſpoken of, Chriſt the heavenly image, the new man,

man, which is created and formed in man? And then God owneth ſuch to be his people, *Iſa.* li. 16.

No man can do that which is righteous, but he that firſt partakes of God's righteous nature and Spirit. The tree muſt firſt be good, before the fruit can be ſo. A man muſt firſt be renewed and made righteous, before he can bring forth righteouſneſs. So that he that doth bring forth righteouſneſs, without doubt he is inwardly renewed, without doubt he is inwardly righteous. Did the Gentiles do by nature the things contained in the law? Then, without doubt, they were partakers of another nature than the old corrupt nature, which is not ſubject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. *Little children, let no man deceive you; he that doth righteouſneſs, is righteous, even as he is righteous*, 1 John. iii. 7. This is the true and weighty judgment of God's Spirit; and he that judgeth otherwiſe is deceived, and erreth in this particular; and ſheweth that he doth not yet know God's righteouſneſs, and Chriſt's righteouſneſs, which is one and the ſame. For, *If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteouſneſs is born of him*, 1 John ii. 29. Mark; the new birth precedes the doing of righteouſneſs; and the doing of righteouſneſs is a certain evidence of the new birth. He that doth righteouſneſs is born of God; this fruit can ariſe from no other but the pure, living, heavenly root.

IX.

Of the Grace of the Goſpel.

THE prophets of old propheſied of the ſufferings of Chriſt, and the glory that ſhould follow, 1 *Pet.* i. 10, 11. Now what was the glory which ſhould follow? Was it not the ſetting up Chriſt's inward and inviſible kingdom in the hearts of men? Was it not God's abundant pouring out his Spirit, and filling veſſels therewith; ſo that the Spirit of grace and of glory ſhould reſt upon believers, as it had done upon Chriſt? Was it not God's tabernacling in men, and becoming their God, and making them his people? Was it not the fulfilling the precious promiſes concerning the goſpel-ſtate, whereby men ſhould be made partakers of the divine nature (of the heavenly image), and be changed from glory to glory, by the renewing Spirit and power? Was it not to have fellowſhip with Chriſt, not only in his ſufferings and death, but alſo in his reſurrection and kingdom; where the bread and wine of the kingdom is eaten and drank, and the feaſt of fat things partaken of? Is it not a glorious ſtate to be tranſlated out of the kingdom of darkneſs, into the kingdom of the dear Son? And to dwell with Chriſt in the kingdom; and ſup there with him, and he with them? To have fellowſhip (pure fellowſhip, living fellowſhip) with the Father and the Son, that the bleſſedneſs and joy of the ſoul in the goſpel-ſtate may be full?

The

The law was a miniſtration of ſhadows; for under it were the various and many ſhadows of the good things to come, which were to be poſſeſſed and enjoyed in the days of the goſpel. In the law there was an outward people (the Jews outward), an outward covenant, an outward land of bleſſings, plenty and reſt; an outward Sion, outward Jeruſalem, outward temple, outward ark, outward table, outward laver, outward candleſticks, outward lamps, outward oil, outward anointing, outward circumciſion and ſacrifices, outward new moons and ſabbaths, outward kings, outward prieſts, and outward victories over outward enemies, *&c.*

But now, in the goſpel, there is the ſubſtance of theſe things inwardly revealed, and inwardly poſſeſſed and enjoyed; even the Jew inward (the new man of the heart) an inward covenant of life and peace, an inward land of bleſſedneſs, of reſt; an inward ſabbath or day of goſpel-reſt (which the true believer keepeth in the faith, not bearing any burden, kindling any fire, nor doing any work of the fleſh therein); an inward Sion, an inward Jeruſalem or holy city; an inward temple (in which is the Holy of Holies), an inward ark, in which the law of life is treaſured up; inward table, inward laver, inward candleſtick, inward lamp, inward oil, inward anointing, inward circumciſion and ſacrifices, and ſolemn ſeaſons; the inward King of Glory, inward prophet and prieſt known, even Chriſt within, who giveth victories and dominion over the inward enemies, and giveth his to partake of his kingdom and prieſthood, *Rev.* i. 6. Yea, and (by his Spirit poured out upon them) maketh his ſeers and prophets alſo, as it is written, *I will pour out my Spirit upon all fleſh, and your ſons and your daughters ſhall propheſy.*

Now, was not this fulfilled after the ſufferings of Chriſt in the fleſh? And is it not daily more and more fulfilled, as the ſufferings of Chriſt, which are yet behind, are filled up in his body the church? Did not the glory then ſucceed? Was not the goſpel-ſpirit and power then revealed and beſtowed? And did it not bring into the goſpel-ſtate? Were not the precious promiſes fulfilled therein? 2 *Peter* i. 5, 6. Are they not all yea and amen in Chriſt? Is not the veil or covering taken away in him? Is not the glory revealed in him? Is not the Lord one, and his name one in him? Is there not glory then in the higheſt, on earth peace, and good-will among men, as well as good-will in God towards men? Where is then the enmity and wars; the luſts and fightings? Where is the envy of Judah or Ephraim, or the vexing one another here? Are not theſe things drowned in the love and in the peace, in the life and in the power which is revealed in the goſpel-ſtate, and ſprings up in the goſpel-ſpirit? They know not what ſpirit they are of, who would have fire come down from heaven upon the diſobedient and gainſayers. To be ſure, they are not of the goſpel-ſpirit, not of Chriſt's Spirit, who came not to deſtroy mens lives, but to ſeek and ſave that which was loſt, and to overcome by the overflowings of his love and tender viſits

of his life. And how do his children make war in this day? Is it not with innocency, with meekneſs, with patience, with bowels of love, with long-ſuffering, with truth, with righteouſneſs, like the followers of the Lamb, like the children of him who abounds therein? Indeed there is a ſword given, there is a threſhing inſtrument, there are darts and arrows to be ſhot into the hearts of the King's enemies, *Pſa.* xlv. 3, 4, 5. But it is not to deſtroy the creature, but rather to ſmite and wound that ſpirit which captivates it, that the creature may witneſs deliverance and freedom therefrom: though it is true, that they who join with that ſpirit, muſt partake of its judgments and plagues, even to deſtruction, if they ſo continue.

Now this glory is wrapped up in the grace which is miniſtered by the goſpel; and where grace is ſown, the glory is ſown (there is a true ſeed of the glory); and where grace abounds, the glory abounds. It was ſaid concerning the firſt gathering of Chriſtians by the apoſtles, that *great grace was upon them all*, Acts iv. 33. and indeed, it was a precious and glorious ſtate, which they were gathered into and brought forth in. Now the grace is revealed again, the grace is poured forth again, the grace hath appeared, teaching and bringing ſalvation again; doth it not behove every one to know it and partake of it? Not to be content with words concerning the grace, but to know the grace itſelf, receiving it from the hand of him that giveth it, and hearing the voice, reproofs, and inſtructions of it? *Hear, and your ſouls ſhall live.* Whom ſhould they hear? Are they not to hear Chriſt, the great prophet? How ſhall they hear Chriſt? Is there any other way, than by hearing his grace teaching them? Than by hearkening to the meaſure of the gift of grace, which is by Jeſus Chriſt? *The law was given by Moſes* (all his people, all his children, all his family were to come under the law, to be governed by the law). *Grace and truth comes by Jeſus Chriſt* (all his children, all his people, all his family are to come under the grace, to be governed by the grace), who is faithful in all his houſe, diſpenſing of his grace and truth to all his, as Moſes did of the law (committed to him) to all under him. So then, all that deſire to be truly Chriſtians, let them wait to know what the grace and truth which Chriſt giveth is, and to partake of it and come under it; under its teachings, under its influences, under its protection, under its government (by being ſubject to it; and in every thing guided by it) that they may know what that ſcripture means, in the true and weighty experience: *Sin ſhall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law, but under grace*, Rom. vi. 14.

X.

A Queſtion anſwered concerning real Holineſs.

Queſt. *ARE not perſons to be really holy (really ſanctified in Chriſt Jeſus) who would be received by the Lord, and enjoy fellowſhip with him as ſons and daughters, in the goſpel of his Son?.*

Anſw. Under the law, that people of the Jews were to be ſeparated from the Heathen, to be outwardly circumciſed and cleanſed by the water and blood of purifying (which ſanctified to the purifying of the fleſh), and not to touch any dead or unclean thing; for any ſuch thing polluted them, and thoſe that were unclean muſt be kept without the camp, as unfit for the holy communion with God and his people, till cleanſed.

Now what did this ſignify? Did it not ſignify that pure and clean ſtate inwardly, which God requireth under the goſpel? Did it not ſignify the inward circumciſion of the heart and ſpirit before the Lord, and the cleanſing of the ſoul, mind, and body, before its appearing to worſhip in the inward and ſpiritual temple? *Heb.* x. 22. Is there not a Jeruſalem under the goſpel, into which no uncircumciſed or unclean thing is to enter, or appear before God there? Mark what the apoſtle ſaith, *Heb.* xii. *Ye are not come to the Mount that might be touched*, to outward Mount Sinai, or Sion, to the appearance of God there; but ye are come to the inward Sion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jeruſalem, and to fellowſhip with God and Chriſt there, *ver.* 18.—22.

Now what is the way to this holy fellowſhip and heavenly communion? Doth not God himſelf preſcribe it? 2 *Cor.* vi. 16, 17. *Wherefore come out from among them, and be ſeparated*, ſaith the Lord, *and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you; I will be a Father unto you, and ye ſhall be my ſons and daughters, ſaith the Lord Almighty.* For God would have a people repreſentatively holy in the time of the law (yet not deſtitute of inward holineſs), and he will have a people really holy in the time of the goſpel. *He that defileth the temple of God, him will God deſtroy:* but keep the temple pure, holy, and then the Holy God will dwell and appear there, according to his promiſe; *I will dwell in them, and walk in them.* And this is eternally true, and witneſſed by certain experience among them that know the Lord; that if any thing that is unclean be touched, there is a defilement thereby, and there muſt be a cleanſing felt, before an admittance into the preſence of the Holy God, and enjoying fellowſhip with him again.

XI.

Concerning the Law of Sin in the Fleſhly Mind, and the Law of Life and Holineſs in the Renewed Mind; and whence each have their Strength.

WHAT is the law of ſin? Who writes it in the mind? And what is it when it is writ? *When luſt hath conceived, it bringeth forth ſin: and ſin when it is finiſhed, bringeth forth death*, James i. 15. So that the firſt beginning of ſin *is evil luſt*; and the whole corruption that is in the world, is through luſt, 2 *Peter* i. 4. Now whence cometh that luſt? Is it not begotten in the mind and ſpirit by the tempter? And what is the law, both of the luſting, and of the ſins committed through the luſt? Is it not the luſtful nature, the luſtful will, the luſtful wiſdom, the luſtful deſires and paſſions, which the God of this world begetteth in the worldly part? So on the other hand, there is an holy law in the holy and renewed mind. Whence cometh that law? Doth it not come from God? Doth it not come from the Holy One? Is it not he that blots out Satan's law, and then writes his own law in the hearts of his? Now, what is his law? Is it not of a contrary nature to Satan's law? What God writeth in the hearts of his, teaching them holineſs, requiring holineſs, enlightening the mind unto holineſs; manifeſting the good, perfect, and acceptable will, is not that his law? Under the old covenant the law was at a diſtance, writ in tables of ſtone; but under the new covenant the law is nigh, written in the heart by the Spirit and power of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. For he is King, the inward King, the ſpiritual King of his people, who cometh to reform, and amend by his covenant, what was amiſs under the former. Now, becauſe he found under the old covenant, that laws outwardly written would never bring men into, and keep men in, ſubjection to his Father; therefore he writeth inwardly by his Spirit and power, and viſiteth with the inward eternal day, even the day of his power; and ſo maketh his people willing to receive the law of his Spirit of life, which maketh *free from the law of ſin and death*. For this law being inward and ſpiritual, and more powerful than the other, overcomes the other law, even the *law of ſin and death* (though it be inward and ſpiritual, and inwardly written alſo), and ſetteth free from it; *Rom.* vi. 18. and viii. 2.

Now theſe laws have each their ſtrength from him that writes them. The law of ſin and death hath its ſtrength from the god of this world, the prince of darkneſs, who ruleth in all that are diſobedient to the Spirit and power of Chriſt. The law of holineſs, the law of life, the law of faith in the power, the law of obedience to God's Holy Spirit, hath its ſtrength from the Holy One, from the prince of life and peace; for Satan is near his ſubjects, and dwells in them, to act them, and to make his laws of

ſin

ſin and diſobedience forcible in them. Every motion and temptation to ſin he kindles, and adds vigour to, that he may ſet on flame the wicked ſpirits of men after ſin, vanity, pride, luſt, uncleanneſs, cruelty, and all manner of wickedneſs, that they may draw on iniquity as with cart-ropes, and drink it in as the ox doth water (*James* iii. 6.) And the Lord alſo is near to the ſoul; the king of holineſs, the king of righteouſneſs and peace is near, to give ſtrength to every holy deſire in the heart, and to every motion of his Spirit towards that which is good and holy. Hence it is, that he that truſts God's Spirit, watching to, and following the movings and drawings thereof, finds life flow in, virtue and ſtrength flow in, to carry on effectually in that which the Spirit of the Lord moves to. So that come but truly to know a motion, to underſtand the drawings and leadings of God's Spirit, ſtrength is never wanting to him who giveth up in the faith to follow the Lord in that which he moves and draws to. And this is the great ſkill of Chriſtianity, to come inwardly to know the Lord; to know the inward appearances of the Shepherd, his leadings out into the paſtures, where eternal life is fed on; and again into the fold of reſt, which is no leſs than the boſom of love, and life eternal. How the growth of the new man, the growth of the Chriſtian ſtate, is in the exerciſe under the law of life, under the law of the Spirit. For the Spirit exerciſeth the mind by his law, and the mind is to give up to the exerciſe thereof, and to wait upon the Lord in it day and night; finding itſelf never without, but ſtill under the law to Chriſt in every thing. And indeed how can a man do any thing aright without the ſenſe and knowledge of the law? How can a man fight aright with his ſpiritual enemies without underſtanding the law of fighting? For there is a lawful fighting, and an unlawful fighting, againſt the ſoul's enemies. The unlawful fighting is in the ſelf-will, wiſdom, and ſtrength, according to one's own apprehenſions and conceivings, which gains no real ground; and therefore they that ſo fight cannot overcome. The lawful fighting is in the faith, in the wiſdom and guidance of the Lord, in his Spirit and power, and this is ever ſucceſsful. So there is a lawful running, and an unlawful running the race, which the apoſtle plainly implieth, when he ſaith, *So run that ye may obtain*, 1 Cor. ix. 24. So likewiſe there is a law of prayer, a law of faith, a law of love, a law of new obedience, a law of liberty (for the liberty under the goſpel is not boundleſs, but bounded by the Spirit) a royal law, which the king of glory writes, and keeps living in the heart; by which his will is underſtood, and the way of life known, which never can be underſtood by any but thoſe in whom this law is written, even the law of the new covenant, the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus.

Read and conſider this ſeriouſly: for indeed it contains the very myſtery of Chriſtianity and redemption. For redemption is not by a notional knowledge of Chriſt (it is not ſo witneſſed by any), but by receiving and ſubjecting to the law of his Spirit. And mind and wait to know and underſtand whether this be not the law which David ſpeaks of, when he ſaith,

Pſal.

Pſal. xix. 7, *&c. The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the ſoul. The teſtimony of the Lord is ſure, making wiſe the ſimple. The ſtatutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the Lord clean, enduring for ever; the judgments of the Lord truth, altogether righteous.* Certainly the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus is all this, containing in it the commandment which is life everlaſting, and the ſure teſtimony, and all the holy ſtatutes, judgments, and fear, which the ſoul need to learn; and is indeed perfect, and able to convert and inſtruct perfectly the converted ſoul. And here the ſcripture is fulfilled under this holy law of the Spirit and power of life, *They ſhall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, ſaying, Know the Lord* (they ſhall not do ſo in this covenant, under this miniſtration, which is a miniſtration not of the letter, but of the Spirit); *for they ſhall all know me, from the leaſt of them to the greateſt of them,* by the teachings of my own Spirit, by my writing my law in their hearts, by my holy unction, which ſhall teach my children, my anointed-ones, all that they need to know, 1 *Joh* ii. 27. *Jer.* xxxi. and *Heb.* viii.

Come, be not deceived about the new covenant; but wait to find the entrance thereinto, and to feel the virtue thereof, and to know and receive the law and power thereof, as becometh Chriſtians.

XII.

Concerning God's gathering us home to himſelf, who are a People deſpiſed and rejected of Men, and in ſcorn by them called QUAKERS.

IT pleaſed the Lord, who is rich in mercy and goodneſs, to pity our wanderings and ſore diſtreſſes, and at length to gather us home to the light and Spirit of his Son, which was the goſpel-ſtandard in the apoſtles days.

Now that by which God gathered us was the power of Chriſt, and the preaching of the everlaſting goſpel by the miniſtry which he hath raiſed up in theſe latter days. For as the Lord raiſed up a miniſtry to preach it at firſt, when he had ſome of the Jews and many of the Gentiles to gather; ſo he hath raiſed up a miniſtry to preach it again after the apoſtaſy, that he may cauſe the ſound thereof to go through all nations. And this miniſtry hath been raiſed to go forth in the ſame virtue, power, and Spirit wherein the foregoing miniſtry was ſent.

God promiſed of old, that he would ſeek after, ſearch out, and gather home, his ſcattered ſheep himſelf, and become their Shepherd, *Ezek.* xxxiv. Now this was fulfilled in a great meaſure in the days of Chriſt and his apoſtles, when Chriſt came himſelf, and alſo ſent his apoſtles after him, to ſeek and gather the loſt ſheep of the houſe of Iſrael; and not only ſo, but alſo to preach the goſpel to all nations, that he might be God's ſalvation to

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the ends of the earth, gathering and ſaving loſt and ſcattered ſouls out of every quarter and corner thereof.

But afterwards (after the ſpreading of the goſpel, and Chriſt's gathering of many thereby) there was a great apoſtaſy, and ſcattering from this holy ſtandard of life and ſalvation, and darkneſs overſpread the nations again, and an antichriſtian reign and kingdom got up, under a form and forms of godlineſs, without the life and power; in which forms people generally have been ſcattered from the life and power, which indeed is the goſpel.

Now, in this cloudy and dark time, great hath been the loſs and diſtreſs of the poor hungry ſheep; their ſhepherds and watchmen not being able to preach the goſpel diſtinctly to them, and direct their minds to the Spirit and power which ſaves: therefore God, in pity to this ſad and loſt condition of his ſheep, ſends his angel to preach his everlaſting goſpel to *them that dwell on the earth; to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people*, Rev. xiv. 6.

Now as the former publiſhing of the goſpel began at the ſcattered Jews, who were God's people under the law; ſo this begins at the ſcattered Chriſtians, who had ſome true deſires, and had been ſeeking after the Lord (from mountain to hill, and hill to mountain), but could by no means find him; nor by any of the watchmen hear any certain news of their ſouls beloved. But the Lord, in his tender love and rich mercy, in the appointed time, ſends forth the Shepherd of Iſrael to ſeek and find them out. And, bleſſed be the Lord, he ſought them effectually, and hath found out many, and perſuaded them to follow him; and hath brought their weary ſouls home to their proper reſting-place, where they dwell under the care of the Shepherd and Biſhop of their ſouls.

But if any ſhall yet further enquire, *How, and by whom, the goſpel was preached unto us?* My anſwer is, *By the Shepherd himſelf.* God himſelf gave forth the ſound, and great hath been the company of them that publiſhed it; and our ears and hearts were opened by the Lord to hear the ſound, and know the Shepherd's voice.

And mind my words (which the Spirit of the Lord is now uttering forth through me; for they are words of truth, and certain underſtanding): they that do not hear and own the ſound thereof now (from this miniſtry which the Lord hath now choſen, and ſent forth), would not have heard nor owned the ſound thereof in Chriſt's and his apoſtles days, had they lived therein; but have reproached and oppoſed them, had they lived then in thoſe days, as they do now in theſe days. For of a truth it is the voice and ſound of one and the ſame Spirit and wiſdom; and they that do deſpiſe the one, would have deſpiſed the other, had they lived in the day of the appearance and manifeſtation thereof.

And then, for the manner of its preaching, it was juſt ſuch as is deſcribed, *ver.* 7. of *Rev.* xiv. For we are commanded to *fear God, and give glory to him, becauſe the hour of his judgment* (the great and terrible day of the

the Lord) *was come*; and therefore to leave off all falſe ways and worſhips, and learn to worſhip the living God, the Creator of all, in Spirit and in truth. And truly it was a terrible day to the man of ſin in us; for the judgments of God were revealed againſt him, and we in fear lay under the judgment, that we might learn righteouſneſs, and witneſs the redemption of Sion thereby.

Now being thus turned to that light, and Spirit, and power, which judgeth, it wrought effectually in us againſt the darkneſs and power of Satan; ſearching, trying, manifeſting, judging the ſecrets of our hearts daily. It tried all our knowledge, all our faith, all our deſires, all our thoughts, words, ways, and worſhips; ſo that all things were naked and open before him with whom he had to do; and what had gone before, as glorious and taking in our eyes, was now manifeſted to be loathſome and abominable in the ſight of God. For indeed the axe was laid to the root of the tree, and every plant which the heavenly Father had not planted was he now plucking up, that they might no longer cumber the ground; but he might have room for his own ſeeds and plants of holineſs and righteouſneſs, which he was ready to ſow in his own garden.

And ſo at length we came to witneſs (abiding the trial of this dreadful day, wherein our God appeared to us as a conſuming fire) a new heaven and a new earth inwardly; and no more ſea of wickedneſs, no more ſea of inward trouble; but righteouſneſs, peace, and joy inwardly; and our God becoming a rich portion to us, watching over us in moſt tender care and love, and delighting in us to do us good, making known to us the riches of the goſpel, even the feaſt of fat things; and giving us to partake of the well or fountain of living waters in our own hearts, which ſprings up freſhly in us daily unto life eternal. So that we were not only invited to the waters, but taught alſo to come thereto: and when we came, we were not ſent away empty, but had the water of life given us; which became ſuch a well, as out of it flow ſtreams of living water. Ah! bleſſed be the Lord! Did we ever think, in our dry, dead, barren, eſtate, to have ſeen ſuch a day as this?

And all this we met with in the way of ſelf-denial, and taking up the croſs; in denying our own wiſdom, our own knowledge, our own faith, our own righteouſneſs, and all that we could call our own; and owning a little ſeed of light and life eternal, even the ſeed of the everlaſting kingdom, which the Shepherd of Iſrael diſcovered to us, and helped us to ſearch after, and taught us how to find; which was indeed in a way very deſpiſeable, even to the eye of our own wiſdom. For thus it was:

We had been long looking out abroad, ſearching very diligently the ſcriptures, and other ſerious books, for great, full, certain, and undoubted wiſdom and knowledge; but now we were directed to turn inwards (even thither where we thought no good was to be found) to mind the appearance of God there, the Spirit of God teſtifying to us (according to the

ſcriptures

ſcriptures of truth) that the kingdom was within; and there we were directed to ſearch for the leaſt of all ſeeds, and to mind the loweſt appearance thereof, which was its turning againſt ſin and darkneſs; and ſo by minding and obſerving that in us which turned againſt ſin and darkneſs, we came by degrees to find we had met with the pure, living, eternal Spirit; and by obſerving the movings, ſtirrings, guidings, directions, and law thereof, we found, *ere we were aware*, that we had met with the law of the new covenant, the law of the Spirit of life, which had life and virtue in it, to enable us to do the holy will; and then our hearts rejoiced, being made truly ſenſible that we had found that which we had mourned after, and longed for all our days. And then we began to ſee our way more clearly, and to wait on our God for his teachings, and to follow the Lamb, our leader, with joy and comfort. For indeed this experience greatly ſettled our ſpirits; knowing aſſuredly, that as none but Chriſt could do thoſe works outwardly which he did in the days of his fleſh; ſo none beneath his Spirit could do theſe works inwardly, enlighten inwardly, enliven inwardly, bind up and heal inwardly, open the inward eye, the inward ear, the cloſed heart, and looſen the dumb tongue, ſo as the touch of his power, and virtue of his life and holy preſence among us, hath done very frequently and livingly.

And now is this teſtimony nothing to you, O ye profeſſors, that we have found him by God's holy guidance (or rather have been found by him) whom we could never find in your ways and gatherings? But ſtill that which God had quickened in us was there unſatisfied, weary, panting, and gaſping, for want of, and after, the breath of life.

Oh! come and ſee if this be not he indeed! Wait to feel the cloſing of that eye which cannot ſee (which God hath ordained ſhall never ſee), and for his opening the eye which is as yet blind in you (to which he giveth the true ſight), that ye periſh not from the way of life, through miſtakes and deceits from the miſts of darkneſs, which are yet over all who have not ſeen the light of God's day. To the law, and to the teſtimony (to the inward law, and inward teſtimony, if ye be inward Jews; for the law inwardly written is light, even the light of the living, and the teſtimony of Jeſus is the Spirit of prophecy); for he that knoweth not theſe, nor walketh according to theſe, nor ſpeaketh according to this Word, it is becauſe there is as yet no morning in him.

Oh! come to the morning light of the everlaſting day! Come to the Son's light, to the Son's Spirit! Wait for the dawning of the day of righteouſneſs, love, and peace, and for the ariſing of the day-ſtar. COME, DIE TO YOUR OWN WISDOM (it was the word livingly ſpoken to me, and entered my ſoul when it was ſpoken; never departing from me, though I was long in learning it), and know what it is to ſuffer with Chriſt, that ye may alſo reign with him.

Ah! if that candle were lighted in you, which ye ſo much reproach and deſpiſe the light of, ye might ſee, that inſtead of ſuffering with Chriſt, that which is of Chriſt in you (the pure light, the pure life of his Spirit) ſuffers by you, and the worldly ſpirit lives (ſhall I add, and reigns) in you, under all your profeſſions, knowledge, faith, worſhips, duties, Ordinances, as ye call them, who want the knowledge of the everlaſting ordinance, even of the Spirit and power of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; which is the great ordinance and way of the goſpel! And he that is ſubject to this ordinance ſhall be ſaved; but he that miſſeth of this, ſhall periſh; let him ſearch the ſcriptures, and practiſe according to what he apprehends therefrom, as exactly as he can, without this Spirit and power.

XIII.

A few Words concerning the Worſhip which our God hath taught us.

OUR worſhip is a deep exerciſe of our ſpirits before the Lord, which doth not conſiſt in an exerciſing the natural part or natural mind, either to hear or ſpeak words, or in praying according to what we, of ourſelves, can apprehend or comprehend concerning our needs; but we wait, in ſilence of the fleſhly part, to hear with the new ear, what God ſhall pleaſe to ſpeak inwardly in our own hearts, or outwardly through others, who ſpeak with the new tongue, which he unlooſeth, and teacheth to ſpeak; and we pray in the Spirit, and with the new underſtanding, as God pleaſeth to quicken, draw forth, and open our hearts towards himſelf.

Thus our minds being gathered into the meaſure, or gift of grace, which is by Jeſus Chriſt; here we appear before our God, and here our God, and his Chriſt, is witneſſed in the midſt of us.

This is that gathering in the name, which the promiſe is to, where we meet together, waiting with one conſent on the Father of life, bowing and confeſſing to him in the name of his Son; and that fleſhly part, that fleſhly underſtanding, that fleſhly wiſdom, that fleſhly will, which will not bow, is chained down, and kept under by the power of life, which God ſtretcheth forth over it, and ſubdueth it by. So then, there is the ſweet communion enjoyed, the ſweet love flowing, the ſweet peace of ſpirit reaped, which the Father breathes upon, and gives to his children; the ſweet joy and refreſhment in the Lord our righteouſneſs, who cauſeth righteouſneſs to drop down from heaven, and truth to ſpring up out of the earth. And ſo our Father is felt bleſſing us, bleſſing our land, bleſſing our habitations, delighting in us, and over us to do us good; and our land yields its increaſe to the Lord of life, who hath redeemed it, and planted the precious plants and ſeeds of life in it.

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The CONCLUSION.

NOW this ought to be the great care of every renewed mind, even to keep out that which is unclean. The enemy will be aſſaulting, tempting, caſting into the mind that which is unclean; but the pure, chaſte mind will not entertain or touch it, but withdraw and retire from it into the place of ſafety, into the ſtrong tower of defence, from all the aſſaults and annoyances of the enemy. Such the Lord receiveth, ſuch the Lord delighteth in as his dear children, and in every reſpect carrieth himſelf as a Father to; and this is a precious ſtate truly to enjoy.

Now, bleſſed be the Lord, who hath revealed and beſtowed on his ſons and daughters, in theſe latter days, that light of his Holy Spirit, which ſearcheth the moſt inward parts, diſcovering every thing that is of a contrary nature to itſelf, turning and ſeparating the mind therefrom, and bringing the mind, heart, ſoul, and ſpirit under that, which is a croſs and yoke to it, and hath power from God to crucify and ſubdue it; that ſo life and immortality may be brought to light, and reign in the heart; and death and uncleanneſs be ſwallowed up in victory. For this is the intent of the goſpel, and of Chriſt's appearance, even to deſtroy ſin, and bring up the holy ſeed, and eſtabliſh the law of the new covenant, the law of love, the law of life, righteouſneſs, and holineſs, in which the renewed ſhould walk before the Lord all their days.

And God forbid, but that the goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt (which is the power of God unto ſalvation), ſhould attain its end, and the will of God be fulfilled; which is the ſanctification of his people in ſoul, body, and ſpirit; that they may be wholly leavened with the leaven of his kingdom, and become a new lump to him.

The Lord bring this to paſs in the hearts of the children of men, bringing down all religions which have not the true virtue in them; and propagate and eſtabliſh the religion more and more, which ſtands in the evidence, demonſtration, virtue, and power of his own Spirit; that men may be redeemed out of, and preſerved from, deceit, in matters of religion, wherein the eternal condition of their ſouls is ſo deeply concerned! *Amen.*

A

QUESTION ANSWERED

CONCERNING

Reading the SCRIPTURES aright.

QUESTION.

How may a Man know, whether he readeth the Scriptures to his Advantage and Benefit? Or whether he readeth them to his Diſadvantage or Hurt?

THAT the holy ſcriptures, written by men inſpired by God's Spirit, were of great uſe and benefit to thoſe to whom they were written (they rightly underſtanding them, and becoming ſubject to the voice of God's Spirit in thoſe that wrote or ſpoke them) is an undeniable truth.

And that they were not only written for them, but for others alſo, in future ages, who alſo may reap benefit in the reading of them; this is as manifeſt.

Yet that men may ſo read them, as not to underſtand them aright, but miſapply them to their own hurt; that is true alſo, and hath been often, and is ſtill evidenced by lamentable experience.

The Jews, the Scribes and Phariſees, heard and read the law and prophets to their hurt; ſome in a ſpirit of direct oppoſition to the truths and will of God, held out by the prophets; others in a ſpirit of miſunderſtanding.

Thus the Scribes and Phariſees, in Chriſt's time, ſo read the words of Moſes and the prophets (who teſtified concerning the Son, and his coming,

as that thereby they became ſtrong, wiſe, and confident, in oppoſing him when he came. They thought they could prove by ſcriptures, that *this* was not, could not be He: he was to be a glorious King, and to reſtore Iſrael. This was a mean man, a carpenter's ſon; and ſo taught, and ſo behaved himſelf, that if men *believed in him, the Romans would thereby be provoked to deſtroy their place and nation.* He was an eater, a drinker, a friend of publicans and ſinners, a frequent breaker of the ſabbath, a Galilean, *&c. And ſhall Chriſt come out of Galilee? Search and look; for out of Galilee ariſeth no prophet*, John vii. 52. As if they had ſaid, can this be the Meſſiah, of whom the ſcriptures have ſo abundantly propheſied, who cometh out of Galilee, out of which the ſcriptures have not propheſied of ſo much as any prophet to ariſe? Thus they read the ſcriptures to their hurt.

And ſo afterwards, in the apoſtles days, men wreſted the words of the apoſtles, as they did alſo the other ſcriptures, to their own deſtruction.

And ſince, in the apoſtaſy from the apoſtles ſpirit, life, and doctrine, and the coming up of many ſects, heads, and horns; which of them have not ſo read the ſcriptures, as to confirm themſelves even in thoſe very doctrines and practices, which are directly contrary to the doctrines, practices, and ſpirit of the apoſtles?

Yea, ſince God's breaking the darkneſs of the night, and cauſing the light of his day again to ariſe, how do men read and underſtand ſcriptures? Even ſo as to oppoſe this light, life, ſpirit, and power, now it is again made manifeſt; thinking and judging its appearance now (according to their underſtanding of, and apprehenſions on the ſcriptures) to be as contrary to its appearance in the apoſtles days, as the Scribes and Phariſees judged Chriſt's appearance in their days, to be different from, and contrary to, what the prophets had propheſied concerning the Meſſiah.

Therefore it is a matter of very great weight, for a man to know when he reads the ſcriptures aright, that his table (whereon he feeds, and by which food he hopes to live to God, and be accepted with him) become not his ſnare, and ſet him further off from God. For it is as true in this day, as it was in Chriſt's day; that publicans and harlots are nearer the kingdom, than thoſe who are in the ſpirit, wiſdom, and righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees; who have a knowledge, a belief, an hope, a zeal, *&c.* from a miſunderſtanding of the ſcriptures; for this is wrong in a myſtery of deceit, which is worſe in its nature, and more dangerous to the perſon in whom it is, and to the ſouls of others, than the deceit which is openly manifeſt.

Well then; Is it not worth the diligent enquiry, and waiting upon God to know, *What is the right reading of the ſcriptures; and whether a man ſo read them, as is to the benefit and profit of his ſoul, or to his loſs and detriment?* To come then to the Anſwer, which is as followeth.

Anſw. He that reads the ſcriptures in a true meaſure of life received from God, he reads them aright; and whenever he ſo readeth, it is to his

benefit.

benefit. He that readeth out of that, readeth to his hurt; that being then up in him, which miſunderſtands, miſapplies, and grows conceited, wiſe, and confident, according to the fleſh; and ſo he is thereby liable to, and in great danger of, ſetting up his interpretations, inſtead of the meaning of God's Spirit; and of condemning that which doth not aſſent and agree therewith, though it be ever ſo neceſſary and precious a truth of God, and ever ſo fully demonſtrated by his Spirit, to thoſe who are in the true faith and underſtanding.

The true birth is meek, tender, gentle, fearing before the Lord, waiting upon him, often crying to him, that it may not be deceived, that a wrong thing get not up in it; that it receive not any thing for truth, but what he knoweth to be truth; and when the Lord pleaſeth to give the true knowledge, that it hold that knowledge of his truth in righteouſneſs, in his life, in his will, in his wiſdom, *&c.* But the wrong birth is not ſo, nor is its courſe thus; but that is ſubtil in ſearching and forming of things, and holding them in the ſubtilty, and drawing the wrong part in others to own and acknowledge that, which it repreſents and holds forth as truth.

There is a wiſdom in man, which is againſt God; which wiſdom oppoſeth the wiſdom of God two ways; either in a direct, oppoſite way, or in a ſecret, ſubtil, undermining way. Now no man can come to God, or truly underſtand or receive the things of God, but as this wiſdom comes to be confounded and deſtroyed in him, by the light and power of God. All its ſtrong-holds, all its ſubtil imaginations, all its reaſonings and conſultings muſt be daſhed, and brought to nought, before the truth of God can have full place and power in the heart. Now in the true diſcovery of this wiſdom to man, and in his denial of it, watching againſt it, and turning to the other; he may wait upon God aright, receive the knowledge of the heavenly myſteries aright, read the ſcriptures aright, come to the true ſenſe, underſtanding, and experience of them; but at any time, ſo far as he is out of this, he is liable to the ſnare, to the miſunderſtanding of ſcriptures, and to the fleſhly confidence that ariſeth thereupon. So that, having taken up a miſunderſtanding of a ſcripture, or ſome ſcriptures; he will even boldly venture to ſpeak evil of the heavenly and ſpiritual dignities, which are of God, and the holy truths which are held forth by his holy miniſters; againſt the prophets in their day, againſt Chriſt and his apoſtles in their day, againſt the witneſſes in the times of the apoſtaſy, and againſt the angel (learn who that is) that is to preach the everlaſting goſpel again, after the apoſtaſy. Ah! how doth this wiſdom deſtroy and entangle; and how hath it deſtroyed and entangled many at this day, who think they are greatly for God in thoſe things and practices, wherein they are directly againſt him; and that they only oppoſe error, and a wrong ſpirit, when they are oppoſing his truth and his holy Spirit! And it is impoſſible it ſhould be otherwiſe, while they judge and act from that which is wrong, and in that which is wrong. Now mark;

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The Spirit, the truth, the life, the ſubſtance, is God's for ever; the unclean ſpirit cannot enter into it, the unclean womb cannot conceive of it, nor bring it forth; but the letter, the ſhell, the outward figure, the outward relations and deſcriptions of things; the other ſpirit, wiſdom, and nature in man may read, gueſs at, transform, receive, believe, and build up with according to the fleſh. And here is the foundation and riſe of antichriſt and Babylon, among them who raiſe up a building, a knowledge, a faith, an hope, a church, a worſhip, duties, ordinances, juſtification, ſanctification, *&c.* in imitation of Sion. But they are not the thing itſelf, but falſe repreſentations of the thing; either ſuch as were invented by man, or ſuch as were once appointed, and made uſe of by the Spirit of the Lord. For there is little difference between inventing a new thing, and making uſe of an old thing, which once was of God, but is now underſtood, obſerved, and practiſed out of the ſenſe, light, and guidance of his Spirit, in another ſpirit, and according to another wiſdom. Now this is not the right way of reformation; to wit, to return to outward (literal) things, which were practiſed by the Jews in their day, or by the former Chriſtians in their day; but to return to the Spirit that they were in, and to feel (in the true life and leadings thereof) what it teacheth and requireth to be obſerved and practiſed now. For there are things, whoſe value is not in themſelves, but in God's requiring of them; which the wrong ſpirit may get into, and the Lord may draw his people out of them (as he did out of the outward court, into the inward building or temple, by his light and Spirit within, when he gave the outward court to the Gentiles, *Rev.* xi. 1.—8.) And he that is found in thoſe things, after God hath given them to the Gentiles, and drawn his people out of them; is not therein owned or accepted of God, though God may bear with him in the time of his ignorance; yet if he abide in them, after the riſing of light, and its teſtimony, the Lord will not ſo bear with him; but will condemn him, and deal with him as a tranſgreſſor of that covenant, wherein life and peace with him is witneſſed.

Therefore, in all things that concern God, whether in reading the ſcriptures, praying, or obſerving any thing ye call duties and ordinances; Oh! that ye would approve yourſelves Chriſtians indeed, waiting to know your guide and leader, and the true limits which are ſet by God; that ye may ſerve him in the true faith, Spirit, and underſtanding, even in that which God knoweth to be ſo, and not in that which ye may falſly account ſo! For mark; if ye be Chriſtians, are ye not in Chriſt, and is not Chriſt in you? And are ye not to feel his life, and the guidance of his Spirit, ſo as ye may live in the Spirit, and walk in the Spirit, read in the Spirit, pray always in the Spirit, believe in the Spirit, worſhip in the Spirit, and in the holy underſtanding of his truth, which is of him?

He that would be right in religion, muſt have a right beginning. How is that? He muſt begin in the Spirit: his knowledge, his faith, his hope, his

his peace, his joy, his righteouſneſs, his holineſs, his worſhip, *&c.* muſt begin there. He muſt come out of his own ſpirit, his own wiſdom, the counſels and thoughts of his own heart; and wait on him, who beginneth the work of regeneration and life in the heart.

And he muſt afterwards diligently watch againſt that ſpirit and wiſdom, from which the Lord hath led him, that it at no time again enter him; for it will be ſtriving to lead him out of the way, with likeneſſes, and falſe images of things, with knowledge falſly ſo called, with a faith which is not truly of God, nor of the ſame nature with that which he firſt felt; with falſe hopes, falſe fears, falſe joys, a falſe righteouſneſs and holineſs, which are not Chriſt's, nor according to the ſcriptures; but only ſuch as he apprehends to be ſo. For a man, who once taſted the truth, and in ſome meaſure judged aright, may afterwards err in his palate and judgment; and then take the wrong for the true, not keeping to that, nor being now in that, which formerly gave him the true reliſh.

Now, he that would meet with the true religion, the religion of the goſpel, muſt meet with the power, receive the power, believe, dwell, and act in the power. For Chriſt was made a king, prieſt, and prophet, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endleſs life: and his covenant is not like the old, in word or letter; but in the ſame power and life wherein the prieſts were made miniſters.

So the knowledge here, the faith here, the hope here, *&c.* are not literal, but living. He that receiveth this knowledge, receiveth living knowledge. This faith gives victory over unbelief, and over that ſpirit whoſe ſtrength lies in unbelief. This hope purifies the heart even as he is pure. And he that receiveth the righteouſneſs of this covenant, receiveth a living garment, which hath power in it over death and unrighteouſneſs. The beginning of this religion, of this power and holy inward covenant, is ſweet; but the pure progreſs and going on of it much more pleaſant, as the Lord gives to feel the growth and ſweet living freſhneſs of it; notwithſtanding the temptations, fears, troubles, trials, oppoſitions, and great dangers, both within and without, which the life (which was at firſt turned to) being ſtill kept to, by the power which is from in, and through the faith which is in it, in its own ſeaſons and way of its own wiſdom overcomes, giving the ſoul that is diligent and faithful to witneſs, that *all its ways are pleaſantneſs, and its paths peace*; yea, the very *yoke is eaſy and the burden light*, when the mind and will is changed by the power, and helped and aſſiſted by the Lord in its ſubjection to the power.

So the Lord God of tender mercies (who pitieth the miſerable and erring out of the way, eſpecially thoſe in whom he hath begot deſires after himſelf) remove the ſtumbling-blocks, and lead the wandering Jews (who are entangled in their own thoughts and reaſonings about the letter) into that which is of himſelf in them, which is Spirit and life, and was before the letter, and excells the letter (with its diſpenſation) in glory; and is to

remain

remain (after the letter) the reſt, joy, life, peace, and portion of the ſoul for ever and ever. So honour the letter, in believing its teſtimony concerning Chriſt, who is the Shepherd (to whom the ſheep are to be gathered) the way, the truth, the life itſelf, to whom the ſoul is to come, and on whom the ſoul is to wait for life; and having received life from him, to dwell, abide, and grow up into him, who is the life; and not go backward into any thing that is literal, or without life, nor to glory in the knowledge, or literal deſcriptions of things; but forward, into the ſpiritual, heavenly diſpenſation of life and power. The law was letter, the goſpel is life and power: the law was a ſhadow of good things to come; but the goſpel is the ſubſtance, the life, the virtue, the Spirit of what the law ſhadowed out. From hence the Chriſtian is to ſpring; the Jeruſalem from above is to be its mother, the Holy Spirit its begetter. And becauſe here the ſtate of true ſonſhip is witneſſed, therefore God pours out the Spirit of his Son upon theſe; and then the Spirit being received, which is above the letter, a life is to be felt and lived in beyond words; even that which the good words lead to, and end in.

And here the truth, ſweetneſs, and fulneſs of words is known, felt, and wineſſed, even in that which comprehends them, and gives them their due weight and meaſure. Nor can any poſſibly underſtand the words of the Spirit, but he that is in the Spirit; and then he knows the place of the words, which came from the Spirit, and of the Spirit from whom the words came. And this is precious; but not to be witneſſed by the wiſe diſputer, but by the ſerious traveller, who firſt is broken and daſhed to pieces in his own wiſdom, and then afterwards healed, led, and guided by the eternal Spirit of wiſdom, which is the ſure and unerring guide.

The Spirit of God knoweth the things of God, and the ſtates of perſons, and what is proper or improper for them: he knew what was proper for the Jews under the law and prophets, what was proper for them in Egypt, what in the Wilderneſs, what in Canaan, and what in their ſeveral diſperſions and captivities; for the diſciples, in the days of Chriſt's appearance in fleſh, for the churches in the days of the apoſtles, for the witneſſes and mourners in the times of the apoſtaſy, and for thoſe who by his power are raiſed up, and delivered out of the apoſtaſy.

And the Spirit of the Lord doth not only know the ſtate thus in general, but likewiſe every ſoul's particular ſtate, and how to apply things to its ſtate. There are ſome newly quickened, newly come out of the darkneſs. There are ſeveral ſtates and degrees of growth; there is a tempted ſtate, a wandering ſtate, a back-ſliding ſtate, a ſhaken ſtate, an eſtabliſhed ſtate, *&c.* Now there is ſomewhat proper to every one according to his ſtate, which the Spirit of the Lord knows; and thoſe who are called out by him, to miniſter in his name and power, know alſo, as his Spirit pleaſeth to teach them, and make manifeſt to them. All truths are not proper to every ſtate, nor all remedies to every diſeaſe. Chriſt had many things to teach

and ſay to his diſciples, which they were not able to bear; and a man in reading the ſcriptures, though he ſhould underſtand the truth of what he reads; yet he is apt to miſapply things, as to himſelf or others, unleſs the Lord guide and help him. He is apt to apply that to him, which belongs not to him; and thruſt that from him, which belongs to him.

Thus may a man eaſily err and wander, from error to error, and toil and wear out himſelf in his ſeveral apprehenſions, ways, and practices (thinking he doth as he ought, and as God requires of him, according to the ſcriptures) and yet his mind be from that, and his underſtanding out of that, which opens the ſcriptures aright, and gives the right uſe of them.

Therefore wait on the Lord to feel quickenings from him, through a meaſure of his life revealed, and the mind gathered into, and purged thereby; and then wait for the Spirit's appearing to thee in this meaſure; further quickening, purifying, guiding thee, and manifeſting his truth therein to thee, according as he ſees thy need, eſtate, and condition to require.

And thus thou wilt be like a child, living not upon a wiſdom of thy own, but upon thy Father's wiſdom, and not gathering a knowledge according to thy own will, and into thy own comprehenſion; but receiving it as a gift daily from the hands of the Father, and ſo thou ſhalt always have it freſh and living, and ſafe for thy uſe; whereas that, whilſt thou keepeſt in thy comprehenſion, and canſt run to when thou liſteſt, and make uſe of when thou liſteſt, putrifies, and yields but corrupt nouriſhment; feeding not the living, but the dead in thee; and ſo thy very knowledge corrupts thy mind, and brings it into death; and thou haſt only ſuch a knowledge as may be held in the dead part, and ſo liveſt and walkeſt as man may live and walk, without the pure life and preſence of God.

So this is the anſwer which was in my heart (and indeed ſprang up in me, as the queſtion was laid before me in ſpirit). In the true meaſure of life, which is from God, and one with him, the ſcriptures are rightly read and underſtood, in the will of God, by him that doth it in the holy underſtanding which comes from him: not in a man's own will or underſtanding; for he cannot underſtand what ſcriptures he will, or when he will, or as he will; but he muſt wait on him who hath the key, who underſtandeth what is fit and proper for him, to know, or not to know; and ſo openeth or ſhutteth in his eternal pleaſure, and according to his eternal wiſdom; and what he openeth to thee, that is proper for thee to know; and what he ſhutteth from thee, that is proper for thee (as yet) not to know; but to wait the times and ſeaſons of things, which are in the Father's hand. And ſo, what the Lord reveals not to thee, that is yet a ſecret with him, as to thee; but what he reveals to thee, that is thine in his fear and counſel to feed on, and make uſe of.

So here, in the gathering of life, in the holy building, there is a holy order and wiſdom from the Moſt High, wherein every one waits on the Maſter,

Maſter, on the Lord, on the Shepherd, on the Father of ſpirits, and receives from his hand, what is proper to his ſtate. And ſo all hold the head, and live by the life, virtue, and teaching that comes from the head. And there is one God who is over all, and one Chriſt in whom all are, and one Spirit of life in which all are baptized and joined together. And every one as he ſprings from this life, and feels the union, virtue, and fellowſhip thereof, ſo abiding here, he is in his place and ſervice, beloved of the Lord and Father of all, and felt by the life in all, in the unity of the body; and ſo cheriſhed and helped forward in the love and Spirit, wherein the body is knit to the head; yea, whatever his ſtate be (whether a ſtate of mourning, or temptation, or deep diſtreſs; or a ſtate of joy, rejoicing, and peace) yet abiding and waiting on the Lord, he is felt, received, owned, and dearly beloved in the Lord.

I. P.

A few Words to ſuch as Complain for Want of Power.

BE ſure ye receive Chriſt; for he is the ſame that ever he was. *To as many as received him, to them gave he power* (not only to ſtand againſt ſin, but) *to become the ſons of God*; he did ſo formerly, and he doth ſo ſtill. And they that are true Jews, born after the Spirit, truly circumciſed, and are indeed come to Mount Sion, and the heavenly Jeruſalem inwardly; feed on God's holy mountain, and dwell in his holy city, in the building that is from above, for the birth which is from above. There is no complaining in the ſtreets of this city, but what God requireth is performed; and what God promiſeth to his, is enjoyed there; according to the ſeveral ſtates and conditions of each, and according to the ability which is given in the new covenant, where God fulfilleth the good pleaſure of his goodneſs, and the work of faith with power, in the hearts of his daily. Everlaſting praiſes and honour to his name.

Oh! the precious name of Jeſus, in which the ſpirits of the redeemed meet, in which name is power; and he who is the arm and power of God, is in the midſt of them.

They who receive him who is the power, who is a ſpiritual vine and olive-tree to all his, who yields daily of the living ſap and virtue to them (wherein there is power); how can they want power? Or how can they but praiſe the Lord, who daily miniſters unto them of the power of the endleſs life? When the holy life and power ſprings, and is felt, praiſes to the Lord cannot but ſpring with it.

So that it concerns all people ſeriouſly to conſider, whether the reaſon why they have not power, be not becauſe they do not receive Chriſt, who hath all power in heaven and earth given to him. For many talk of Chriſt, but few come to him in the Father's drawings; ſo will not receive him; like the Jews who waited for his appearance, and yet rejected him when he came.

ISAAC PENINGTON.

SOMEWHAT

SOMEWHAT RELATING TO

CHURCH-GOVERNMENT,

WHEREIN THE

Neceſſity, Uſefulneſs, and Bleſſed Effects of the True CHURCH-GOVERNMENT, are here and there hinted at; and this clearly manifeſted,

That the Authority and Power of CHRIST's Spirit in his Church, is no uſurped or Antichriſtian Authority, nor contrary to the True Light and Liberty of any particular Member, but a Cheriſher and Preſerver of it.

AS ALSO

REMARKS

Upon ſome Paſſages in a late Book, Intituled, "Anti-"chriſt's Transformations within, diſcovered by the "Light within."

WHEREIN THE

Antichriſtian TRANSFORMER is made manifeſt, and the LIGHT within cleared from his falſe Imputations and Pretences to it.

Written in Obedience to him that is True; who hath given a certain Teſtimony againſt him that is Falſe, to very many in this his Day; and, among others, to me alſo; whom he hath pleaſed to gather and own among his Children and Servants in Truth,

ISAAC PENINGTON.

For God is not the Author of confuſion, but of peace, as in all churches of the ſaints. 1 COR. xiv. 33.

For what have I to do, to judge them alſo that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within? 1 COR. v. 12.

The government ſhall be upon his ſhoulder, &c. *Of the increaſe of his government and peace, no end,* &c. ISA. ix. 6, 7.

Woe unto the world, becauſe of offences; for it muſt needs be, that offences come: but woe to that man, by whom the offence cometh! MATT. xviii. 7.

For there muſt be alſo hereſies among you; that they which are approved may be made manifeſt among you. 1 COR. xi. 19.

Alſo of your own ſelves ſhall men ariſe, ſpeaking perverſe things, to draw away diſciples after them. ACTS xx. 30.

For not he that commendeth himſelf is approved; but whom the Lord commendeth. 2 COR. x. 18.

THE PREFACE.

IT hath pleaſed God, in theſe our days, to cauſe his true light to ſhine forth out of darkneſs. Oh! everlaſtingly bleſſed be his name! He hath laid the foundation of life in many hearts, and gathered his once deſolate people into families and churches; and hath been with them, and is with them, dwelling among them, preſerving them, building up Sion more and more, and cauſing his glory more and more to appear therein. The living God hath made us a living people, and honoureth us with his living preſence, and with the daily manifeſtations of his pure power. Oh! glory, glory, is ſounded to him, in his own ſpringing life, in the hearts of his children, day by day.

But the enemy of God and his appearance, hath wrought againſt his power and work many ways, and hath endeavoured to ſtop the gathering to the light and building up, not only by outward force, but alſo by all the devices and myſterious workings he could invent. But bleſſed be the Lord, who hath appeared againſt them all, and preſerved his remnant from them all; though ſome that have not watched and lain low, but being ſoaring high, in that part where the ſnare is laid and takes, have ſtumbled and fallen. Yet truth ſtands, and the gathering in the truth ſtands; and the life which God hath raiſed, and to which he hath given dominion, reigns; and much is ſubdued, and the Lord is going on to ſubdue more and more under it daily, in the hearts of ſuch as ſenſibly and livingly, and not notionally and in a dead formal way, wait upon him and worſhip him.

Now, the foreſt and moſt miſchievous way of oppoſing truth, is by pretending to it. Who could more advantageouſly or readily betray Chriſt, than an apoſtle of Chriſt? And who can be fitter to undermine the light, than he who in words cries it up; and yet is departed from it, and ſecretly fights againſt it, and would bring forth, propagate, and ſet up an hideous, monſtrous, comprehenſive kind of knowledge (which is contrary to it, and cannot conſiſt with it) in the name of it?

Ah!

Ah! that this perſon, who now appears againſt the truth, and the church and miniſtry which is in and of the truth, were but what he pretends to be! For then I ſhould gladly have received his teſtimony, and not have been thus neceſſitated to appear againſt his ſpirit, and the dark work and teſtimonies thereof. He ſaith, there are two chriſts, both the true Chriſt and antichriſt. I confeſs his work comes from one of them, even antichriſt, who would deſtroy Chriſt's work, kingdom, and building, and the miniſtry which he makes uſe of, both to plant, water, and build up; but not from that Chriſt who hath gathered a church to himſelf, and is with the church which he hath gathered, and bleſſeth the church which he hath gathered, and owneth them in their aſſemblings, and in their miniſtering: which owning and teſtimony will ſtand; when the diſowning, and falſe teſtimonies of all theſe falſe apoſtate ſpirits, will fall, and end in their own ſorrow and miſery.

What I have here written, I have written in an holy conſtraint, in the opening and feeling life of truth, with true love to ſouls; yea, even of this very perſon, who is erred ſo exceedingly from the holy light and Spirit, and its holy teſtimony, and would fain exalt his critical conceits and notions, above the plain teſtimony and evidence of truth, in the hearts of God's choſen ones.

The Lord bring down the kingdom of darkneſs, and exalt his own kingdom in the hearts of the children of men more and more; and add to his church, and keep them in that which will never ſuffer them to depart from it; or to teſtify againſt the life, and power, and preſence of the Lord, manifeſted, dwelling, and ruling in it! *Amen.*

REMARKS

REMARKS

Upon ſome Paſſages in a late Book, intituled

ANTICHRIST's Transformations Within, &c.

THE firſt thing that I ſhall obſerve is, *That he doth deny that man hath any rule, power, dominion, government, or authority, either given or committed to him from the Lord, as pertaining to the conſcience in things relating to the worſhip of God.*

Remark. God ſent Chriſt into the world, and he gave him power and authority in his name to do whatever he required of him. And Chriſt ſends his ſervants and miniſters into the world, as ſheep among wolves, and he gives them power and authority to do whatever he requires of them, and which he expects from them, and would have done by them. And their work relates to the conſcience, and to the worſhip of God; and their power and authority extends thither, where their work lies. They are ambaſſadors of Chriſt, and they have power and authority in Chriſt's ſtead to beſeech men to be reconciled to God. For as Chriſt came in his Father's name, to fulfil the work which the Father gave him to do, ſo they come in Chriſt's name, to fulfil the work which he gives them to do. They have power to feed the flock; they have power to watch over them; they have power to build up in that which is good; and they have power and authority to teſtify againſt and hammer down that which is evil; they have power to reprove; they have power and authority to viſit with a ſpirit of meekneſs, and power to come with God's rod, yea, with his ſword, and to ſmite that with it which riſeth up againſt the truth, againſt the life, againſt the Spirit, againſt the holy way and work of the Lord, and holy order and government of his Truth and Spirit.

That Chriſt hath ſent forth his ſervants, his miniſters, his ambaſſadors, about things relating to the conſcience, is ſo manifeſt, that it cannot be denied. But that he hath ſent them forth with power and authority in things pertaining to the conſcience, relating to the worſhip of God, that this man denies; but all that have received the truth, hold the truth, and keep the truth, cannot but acknowledge it

Now

Now the reaſon he gives why he denies *man any rule, power, dominion, government, or authority, either given, or committed to him from the Lord, as pertaining to the conſcience in things relating to the worſhip of God, is becauſe it belongeth to Chriſt the light, the inviſible power which dwells in men and women*, &c.

Rem. All power in heaven and earth was given to Chriſt, and belongs to him; that is freely granted.. But the queſtion is, whether he hath not given of this power to his children, and his ſervants and miniſters, as his Father gave of it unto him? Doth not he give power to as many as believe in his name to become ſons of God? Did not he make his apoſtles able miniſters of the new covenant, in the Spirit and power wich he gave them? *All power is given me in heaven and in earth*, ſaid Chriſt, *Matt.* xxviii. 18. *Go ye therefore and teach all nations*, &c. *ver.* 19.; but wait at Jeruſalem for the power firſt, *Acts* i. 8. So when the power came upon them, it led them forth in their work, and they had power to gather, and power to build up, and power to govern and watch over the flock of God, over which the Holy Ghoſt had made them overſeers, *Acts* xx. 28. And Paul ſpeaks of the power the Lord had given him to uſe ſharpneſs, even againſt thoſe in that church of Corinth, who would not be ſubject to him in that which he had received from the Lord, 2 *Cor.* xiii. 10. But this power was to edification, but not to deſtruction. For though he had power from Chriſt the Lord, and did by that Spirit, and in that power, deliver Hymeneus and Alexander unto Satan; yet it was not that they ſhould be deſtroyed by the Devil, but that, by feeling themſelves out of the truth, and under the dominion of a wrong ſpirit, they might come to true ſenſe and underſtanding, and learn not to blaſpheme the truth, nor the dignities whom God hath made honourable in the truth, 1 *Tim.* i. 20. And not the apoſtle only, but the church of Corinth, had a ſhare in the ſame power; and therefore the apoſtle, knowing what was given and committed to them, exhorts them, that in the name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, when they were gathered together, and his Spirit, with the power of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to deliver ſuch an one to Satan: but this was not for deſtruction, to deſtroy the ſoul; but to bring it back into a ſtate of edification and ſalvation, which now, by departing from the truth, it was gone from. It was indeed for the deſtruction of the fleſh, but not of the ſpirit; but that the ſpirit might be ſaved in the day of the Lord Jeſus, 1 *Cor.* v. 4, 5.

Secondly, The next thing I ſhall obſerve is this: he ſaith, *There is no glory to be given to man, although he be born of the light.*

Rem. That glory and honour is to be given to man, which God gives to man, who hath ſaid, *Them that honour me, I will honour*; *and they that deſpiſe me, ſhall be lightly eſteemed*, 1 Sam. ii. 30. He that brings his deeds to the light, they being juſtified and approved there, he hath honour in the light. His deeds being made manifeſt that they are wrought in God, that is honour enough for him, *John* iii. 21. The children of light ſeek

for glory, and honour, and immortality, and eternal life; and that glory and honour they have, and eternal life from God, *Rom.* ii. 7. They ſeek not the honour that is from men, but the honour that cometh from God only, *John* v. 44. the honour in the truth, in the life, in the power, which God gives them in the hearts of all that are truly ſenſible and living. For honouring the Lord and his truth, how can I but honour thoſe that are honourable in his eye, and who are glorious in his truth! For indeed the children of light, the tender, the humble, the contrite and broken-hearted ones, are glorious in his eye, and the Lord doth exalt them in due time; for after the true humility, and in the true humility, they come to partake of the true honour, 1 *Pet.* v. 5, 6. And ſo every true Jew, every true ſervant, every faithful ſteward, every true miniſter, that is faithful in the uſe of his gift and talent, hath praiſe of God, *Rom.* ii. 29.; and they that are of God, honour thoſe whom God honours, glorifying the Lord for them, and honouring them in the Lord, 2 *Cor.* viii. 18. Oh! how could this man ſay, there is no glory to be given to man, though he be born of the light, when-as *the king's daughter is all glorious within*, and man in that birth is nothing but glorious in the eye of the Lord! Man, having ſinned, fell ſhort of the glory of God; but coming out of ſin, cometh into the glory again, and is daily more and more changed into the glorious image of the Son, from glory to glory, *&c.* 2 Cor. iii. 18. The aim of God is to bring many ſons to glory, *Heb.* ii. 10.; and as they come out of darkneſs and ſin into light and holineſs, they come into the glory, and are in the glory. Is it not their glory in the Lord, and in his light, to be owned and acknowledged by them that are one with them in the ſame light? They who love God, and honour God, cannot but love them, and honour them, who are begotten by him, and who are in an eſpecial manner made uſe of by him in his Service, for the good of ſouls, and for the preſervation and building up of the church. The apoſtle ſpeaks of double honour to be given to the elders that rule well, eſpecially they who labour in the Word and doctrine, and would (from the Spirit of God) have them counted worthy of it, 1 *Tim.* v. 17. How far is this man from the apoſtle's mind, who would have no glory given to any man, no not to the children of light, nor miniſters in the light, who in the apoſtles days were the glory of Chriſt! 2 *Cor.* viii. 23. Yea, the juſt that live by faith in Chriſt, and are gathered by him out of Satan's kingdom into his ſpiritual kingdom, and walk in the light, as God is in the light, there light doth ſhine in them, and they do ſhine as the ſun in the firmament; and they that are honoured by the Lord to turn many to righteouſneſs, do ſhine as ſtars: and though one ſtar differs from another in glory; yet all that come into the true nature and heavenly image of the Son, do come into a meaſure of the true glory, and have ſome of the glory given them which God gave to Chriſt; and in that are glorious, partaking of his Spirit, king-

dom,

dom, power, and holy dominion over ſin and Satan, all which is truly glorious, *John* xvii. 22.

Thirdly, The third thing I ſhall obſerve is this: he ſaith, *All is to be given to Chriſt, the light in man, unto whom alone it doth belong, who is the true miniſter, and hath power in himſelf to teach all the ſons and daughters of men*, &c.

Rem. That Chriſt is the true miniſter, that is not denied; but doth not Chriſt, who is the true miniſter in the power of the endleſs life, ſend forth diſciples and ambaſſadors in the ſame power, and make them, through his Spirit and power, able miniſters of the New Teſtament? And they that hear them, do they not hear Chriſt? And they that deſpiſe or deny them, do they not deſpiſe or deny Chriſt? And doth not Chriſt ſay to the ſeventy diſciples, *He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that deſpiſeth you, deſpiſeth me; and he that deſpiſeth me, deſpiſeth him that ſent me?* Luke x. 16. It is antichriſt that ſo vainly pretends to ſet up Chriſt, or his light, or Spirit, or power, as to deny thoſe that are ſent of him, and miniſter in his name. As man is in the fall, he is corrupt, and his works are out of God, and he is there to be denied, ceaſed from, and not accounted of; but in the reſtoration, in union and fellowſhip with the Lord, he is a worker together with God, and is there to be owned, and hath a ſhare in miniſtring out of the heavenly treaſure that dwells in him. So Chriſt was the great Miniſter, who had the fullneſs; and they that have gifts from him for the work of the miniſtry, and who miniſter in and from the gift, and in that are able and faithful, are eſteemed and accounted as miniſters by him. So ſaith the apoſtle, *As every man hath received the gift, even ſo miniſter the ſame one to another, as good ſtewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man ſpeak, let him ſpeak as the oracles of God; if any man miniſter, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified through Jeſus Chriſt, to whom be praiſe and dominion for ever and ever*, Amen, 1 *Pet.* iv. 10, 11. And Paul ſaith, he was made a miniſter of the goſpel according to the gift of the grace of God given unto him, by the effectual working of his power, *Epheſ.* iii. 7. Now the gift is given, not to thoſe that are wiſe after the fleſh (unleſs that wiſdom is firſt broken); but to ſuch as are mean, poor, weak, low, or ſome way or other contemptible in the eye of man's wiſdom, and eaſy to be diſregarded and deſpiſed by men. Yea, it is hard to deſpiſe the man whom God ſends, without deſpiſing his gift in him; and the gift cannot be deſpiſed or rejected, without deſpiſing or rejecting him that gave it; as the apoſtle told the church of the Theſſalonians, he that deſpiſed or rejected, deſpiſed or rejected not man, but God (who gives his Holy Spirit to them whom he ſends forth to miniſter in his name), 1 *Theſſ.* iv. 8. He had been beſeeching and exhorting the brethren by the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that as they had received of them how they ought to walk, and to pleaſe God, ſo they would abound more and more. *For ye know*, ſaid he, *what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* Mark: the apoſtle did not only turn them to the Word of life and power in themſelves; but did give them

commandments from the Word of life in him, and they received of them whom Chriſt ſent forth, how they ought to walk, *&c.* ver. 1, 2. And life hath not loſt any of its authority; but the power may teach and command others through any veſſel when it pleaſeth; and they that are the true ſheep, know the voice of the true Shepherd, ſpeaking either in their own hearts, or through any other inſtrument unto them. And the voice of wiſdom in any, is in every age ſtill heard and juſtified of her children; and he that is of God heareth his voice, in thoſe whom he ſends in this age, as well as in former ages; and he that is not of God heareth not his voice; and hereby the Spirit of truth and ſpirit of error is known in this, as well as in former ages, 1 *John* iv. 6.

Fourthly, The fourth paſſage I ſhall take notice of, is in theſe words: *Wherefore*, ſaid he, *whoſoever doth exalt Chriſt the light, who is the true Miniſter, before themſelves, by Chriſt the light within ſhall thoſe be exalted.*

Rem. This is very different from what went before: for before he denied all glory and exaltation at all to man, although he be born of the light; here he ſpeaks of exalting Chriſt, the true miniſter, before themſelves; which doubtleſs every true miniſter, and every child of light, cannot but do; and herein he confeſſeth they ſhall be exalted by Chriſt the light. Then glory is given to them; and he that ſees them thus exalted by the light, cannot but eſteem them, as ſo honoured and exalted by Chriſt, and give them that glory which Chriſt hath given them. And happy would it be with this man, could he ſee the true church, which God hath brought out of the Wilderneſs, and beautified and gloriouſly built up to a great height; and the elders and miniſters whom he preſerveth, and is with, and makes uſe of in his ſervice, and give them in his heart the honour and glory which God had glorified them with. But that he cannot do, till he come out of Babylon, and out of that dark and confuſed ſpirit wherein he wrote theſe things, into that light and holy Spirit of truth, which diſcovers what they are (to thoſe that are in the truth), and condemns the ground and root out of which they ſprang.

Fifthly, The next thing to be obſerved by me is this: *He layeth it down as his judgment, faith, and belief, that whatever is written* to the churches, ought to be written from God's infallible Spirit, and the Word of eternal life; wherein I am one with him: for what good can any thing do the living, but what comes from life, and from God's infallible Spirit, which alone is able rightly to exhort, adviſe, admoniſh, warn, and build up the ſpiritual? But his inference thereupon is that which is before me to take notice of. *Wherefore*, ſaith he, *your paper to the churches is not to be owned by the churches, inaſmuch as it was written from a ſight, or a ſenſe, and from the ſenſible part, and not in and from the Spirit of Revelation.*

Rem. God hath, in his holy church and living people, opened the eye that was once blind, and daily anointeth that eye, giving a true ſight, and in the ſpringings of life giveth a true ſenſe; and that which giveth this, is the Spirit

Spirit of revelation; and what is written in this ſight and ſenſe, is written from the Spirit of revelation. And the called people of the Lord wait upon the Lord, that they may be kept in this ſight, ſenſe, and Spirit, in what they do at all times; but more eſpecially when they conſider of things relating to the churches, even to the welfare, holy order, and peace thereof, that God's Spirit may have its ſcope every-where, and nothing elſe have place in the churches of Chriſt. And though every one be not an eye and ear-witneſs of what is to be conſidered of for the good of the churches; yet every one waits to feel things in the opening and ſpringing life, and in that to ſpeak, conſider, or write. I have often ſeen the carriage of things after this manner, to the joy of my heart, and cauſing of my ſoul livingly to bleſs the Lord for it; and therefore may I, yea ought I, now thus to ſpeak this teſtimony, which the Lord hath livingly given me, being at this time required of me. Oh! that men knew the ſeriouſneſs and ſolemnity of our ſpirits before the Lord, in our conſidering things relating to his church, and how we retire out of man's wiſdom (affectionate part, and comprehending part, as he ſpeaks) to feel the ſpringing life, and God's holy guidance there; and how the Lord doth ſatisfy and bleſs us with it! So that we can ſay, in truth and uprightneſs of heart, not we (as men) of ourſelves do things on truth's account; but he on whoſe ſhoulders God hath laid the government rules and reigns among us; and things are ordered by his counſel and wiſdom to his praiſe. And the peace and comfort of God's Spirit remains with us, in the midſt of all the reproaches and oppoſitions we meet with from that evil ſpirit, which envieth and oppoſeth us many ways. This one word more is with me, as to this particular: God hath given believers, his church, ſenſes exerciſed to diſcern both good and evil; and thoſe ſenſes are not without the true life and Spirit, and every motion and action of them is in that life, and in that Spirit.

And whereas he further ſaith: *Whatſoever is written, declared, or given forth, in the ſight, or in the ſenſe, or from the ſenſible part, it is not to be owned; for the ſenſible part is that which hath been in the tranſgreſſion with the woman*, &c.

Rem. Herein he is greatly miſtaken: for friends in truth do not ſpeak, or write, or admoniſh, or reprove, or give warning from that part; but from the ſight and ſenſe which God gives to his own birth; and it is the Spirit of God that gives both the ſight and ſenſe, and ſpeaks through them; and thoſe whoſe ears are circumciſed and opened know the voice, and give glory to God, and are obedient to his Spirit, when it gives advice and warning through any; which thoſe that are in the comprehending part, and conſider and judge in that, cannot have the ſenſe of.

Sixthly, He ſaith, *Antichriſt will bring a veil over the underſtanding of men and women, and yet they, for the preſent, cannot perceive it.*

Rem. This is very true. I would he and others, who are veiled by antichriſt, did ſee it; for then he would not eſteem thoſe veiled whom the Lord

Lord hath unveiled, nor attribute theſe ſayings of his, and this his book, to the light within, which thoſe whom the Lord hath unveiled, and keepeth unveiled, in his pure Spirit and quickening life, know to have come from the darkneſs within, and not from the true light; but the true eye, in the truly living, ſees through it, and hath no union with it; but returns it back thither, from whence it came. Oh! how deeply doth antichriſt blind and deceive men; that that which is their own ſtate, they cannot ſee to be ſo! But apply it to others, whoſe ſtate it is not, and ſo juſtify themſelves in that wherein God condemns them, and condemn others in that wherein God juſtifieth them! This is ſad work, and will have a ſad iſſue!

Seventhly, He ſaith, *There is an inviſible woman in every viſible man, and there is an inviſible man in every viſible woman; and the man Chriſt Jeſus, who is the light of the world, he is in them both*, &c.

Rem. Is not he now in the notional and comprehending part, muddling himſelf and others (whoſe ears are open to him) about a woman in a man, and a man in a woman, and Chriſt in both? Whereas truth is a plain thing; which they that come to feel and abide in, feel and witneſs redemption, and preſervation out of the comprehending part, and the dead notional knowledge thereof.

Eighthly, He ſaith, *He doth not own the judgment and opinion of thoſe miniſters, nor yet their ſuperiority, who ſay, he that is not juſtified by the witneſs of God in friends, is condemned by it in himſelf.*

Rem. I ſhall not now argue that there are true miniſters, and that there is a true ſuperiority (ſome being greater and ſome leſs in the covenant and life of truth), which every one that heareth and learneth of the Father, and ſo is taught of God, will own: but to the thing itſelf. The witneſs of God is but one in all, and it condemns nothing but what is not of God; and what his witneſs in another condemns in me, his witneſs in me (whenever it ariſeth and ſpeaketh in me concerning that thing) cannot but condemn alſo.

It is true, as he ſaith, that *juſtification is by Chriſt alone, who is the head in every member*, &c.

Rem. But Chriſt is in other members alſo, as well as in one; and his life hath power to judge and condemn; and it judgeth and condemneth nowhere, but that which is to be judged and condemned. So that where-ever Chriſt's life in any judgeth and condemneth any thing, that is judged and condemned by Chriſt. And the ſaints have power and authority in Chriſt, not only to judge and condemn the world, but alſo to judge and condemn fallen angels and ſpirits. To what end are they bid to try the ſpirits, if after they have tried them, they may not judge and condemn what they find life and truth judging and condemning?

Ninthly, He excepts againſt that paſſage in friends paper (as he recites it) *that none are to miniſter, but thoſe that are reconciled to the church, and have the approbation of the elders.*

Rem.

Rem. What is the end of miniſtering, but to gather out of the world into the church, or to build up the church? And are they fit to do either, who are not reconciled to the church? Or whom the Spirit, life, and power in the church and elders hath not unity with?

He further ſaith, *That God was in Chriſt, reconciling the world unto himſelf, and not to the church (ſaith he); he remembers no ſuch ſcripture.*

Rem. God added to the church ſuch as ſhould be ſaved; and were they not reconciled to it before they were added? And Chriſt ſaid, concerning that brother that would not hear the church, that he ſhould be looked upon as an Heathen or a publican; and are ſuch as will not be reconciled to the church, nor hear it, allowed by God to miniſter, either to gather into the church, or to build up in it? Ah! ſurely it cannot be. There can be no true miniſtering out of the life and Spirit of the body, or church that is in God. And all ſuch as have thus gone out from God, in whom the church is, have miniſtered againſt the life, Spirit, and power, but not in it; but in antichriſt's ſpirit and power, and againſt the truth.

Tenthly, He ſaith, *Chriſt the light within, will not give his power and authority out of his own hand to any man or men; for unto him alone is all judgment in heaven and in earth committed in matters of conſcience.*

Rem. Is Chriſt's power given out of his hands, when his life and Spirit in one judgeth concerning that which is evil and out of the truth in another? Doth not the ſpiritual man judge all things? Doth not Chriſt teach and enable him ſo to do? Is there not ſuch a gift of his to diſcern ſpirits? Cannot the ear that is circumciſed, and kept open by the Lord, try ſpeeches and actions, and diſcern when they are out of the life, and when in the life? And doth he give the power and authority out of his own hands, in enabling them ſo to do? What dark expreſſions are theſe, and dead too; not ſo much as literally true?

Eleventhly, He ſaith, *Chriſt the light within is able to break, and he is alſo able to bind up that which he hath broken, and to heal that which he hath wounded*, &c.

Rem. And hath not Chriſt put a ſpiritual rod and ſword into the hands of his church and miniſtry, with which to ſmite and wound, as his Spirit guides and leads them? Have they not power both to bind and looſe as Chriſt ſaith? And is not this a wounding and healing virtue and power? After Chriſt had ſaid, *Tell the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man or a publican*; doth he not immediately add, *Verily I ſay unto you, whatſoever ye ſhall bind on earth, ſhall be bound in heaven: and whatſoever ye ſhall looſe on earth, ſhall be looſed in heaven?* Matt. xviii. 17, 18. Is not this power and authority neceſſary to the true church? What! a church, and not have power over her own members; but every one left to the dictates of what they ſhall call the light within, and not be ſubject to the judgment of the true light, Spirit, and power of Chriſt, the head in the living body? What a church was this? A mere Babel,

bel, and heap of confuſion, a body that would never be at unity in itſelf. But God is the God of the order of his own Spirit, life, and power; and not of ſuch confuſion. This doctrine may go for truth in Babylon, but can never be owned in God's Jeruſalem, where his Spirit did build up and defends the buildings, and judgeth out all ſuch ſandy and windy doctrines, which are looſe and airy, and have not a ground or bottom in the truth.

Twelfthly, He ſaith, *There is fallibility attends thoſe, who are regenerated, and born of the Spirit of God, who is light, and that it is poſſible for them to err from the light again*, &c.

Rem. He doth herein lay the ſtate of the truly regenerate and born of God lower than the ſcripture lays it. The ſcripture ſaith, *Whoſoever is born of God, doth not commit ſin; for his ſeed remaineth in him, and he cannot ſin, becauſe he is born of God*, 1 John iii. 9. And again, *We know that whoſoever is born of God ſinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himſelf, and that wicked one toucheth him not*, chap. v. 18.

There is a gathering into the ſeed, and an abiding in the ſeed; and there the ſoul is in the ſtrong tower, and munition of rocks, where the enemy cannot reach. Adam in the fall was in a fallible ſtate. Is the renewed, the redeemed ſtate as fallible? What ſtate is that wherein truth is ſo natural, and the ſoul ſo one with it, that it can do nothing againſt the truth, but for the truth, as Paul ſpeaks? What ſtate is that, wherein men overcoming, ſhall become pillars in the houſe of God, and ſhall go no more out? *Rev.* iii. 12. But let men be ever ſo fallible, the infallible Spirit and power is given to the church of God, to guide them in true underſtanding and judgment, eſpecially in all things that relate to and concern them as a body; and they that are of the truth, and in the truth, love the judgment of Chriſt the head in her; but they that are of another ſpirit, and would have liberty out of the truth, to the transforming nature and ſpirit, cannot abide it. What were my life in me, if it did not judge in me? And what were the church's life, if it did not judge in her, and condemn all that riſeth up from a contrary ſpirit and nature? What means that promiſe, *Iſa.* liv. 17. *No weapon that is formed againſt thee ſhall proſper, and every tongue that riſeth againſt thee in judgment, ſhalt thou condemn?*

Yet he confeſſeth, *That God is infallible, and that no fallibility attends him*; but denies *the very regenerate and born of the Spirit to be infallible, and that it is poſſible for them to err from the light again; the enemy, which is the power of darkneſs, preſenting to them the fruit of the tree of knowledge*, &c.

Rem. If God be infallible, as he confeſſeth (though it is to be queſtioned, whether from any true knowledge of his nature, or only from the comprehenſion), and God beget children; into what doth he beget them? Whether into a fallible nature and ſpirit, or into his own nature and Spirit, the leaſt degree whereof is infallible? When men are truly turned to God, there are great and precious promiſes made to them, which through faith, obedience, and diligence, they come to enjoy, whereby they are made *partakers of the divine*

divine nature, 2 Peter i. 4. And when they partake of the *divine nature*, do they partake of a nature that is fallible, or infallible? *He that is joined to the Lord, is one Spirit*, 1 Cor. vi. 17. And is that one Spirit a fallible, or infallible Spirit? There is one baptiſm, wherewith the truly living are baptized; and doth that baptiſm waſh away that which is fallible or no? The church of Chriſt, the body of Chriſt, the ſpouſe of Chriſt, the chaſte virgin that is married to Chriſt, is one with Chriſt: is it one with him in fallibility, or in infallibility? Bear with me, for I am conſtrained to ſpeak theſe things for truth's ſake, for the church's ſake; yea, for Chriſt's ſake, and for the ſakes of them who cry up the light within in words, and yet are deceived about it, and know it not; but are erred from it, and have ſet up the darkneſs of antichriſt in their minds, inſtead of it, which with them goes for the true light; and in this they judge that which is true, as if it were falſe, and juſtify that which is falſe, as if it were true, both in themſelves and others; both which are an abomination to the Lord.

He ſaith, *There is a fallibility attends all thoſe that are regenerate, and born of the Spirit of God.*

Rem. What all? Thoſe that come to the higheſt pitch, and greateſt growth, can they not paſs fallibility, and arrive at infallibility in a meaſure, and abide in it? To be regenerated and born of God, is an high ſtate; it is not for every notioniſt and comprehender to be talking what is experienced there. There is a regenerating, and a being regenerated. There is a following Chriſt in the regeneration, and there is a conformity to him in his death, and in his life too. It is not good for him to be ſpeaking much concerning that ſtate, but rather to wait to be led into it, and to arrive at it in the true travel. But how he that is regenerated is one with Chriſt (and is in the meaſure as he is) is hard to be known, and harder to be uttered. But he that is in this ſtate, hath witneſſed the holy calling, and faithfulneſs to him that called, and the election, and is one of the choſen, or elect of God; and Chriſt ſaith, ſuch are beyond fallibility; for ſpeaking of falſe Chriſts, he ſaith, *If it were poſſible, they ſhould deceive the very Elect*, Matt. xxiv. 24. plainly ſignifying, that it is impoſſible.

Now their poſſibility of erring he lays upon the enemy's preſenting to them the fruit of the tree of knowledge, whilſt they are in Eden, p. 6.

Rem. The enemy's preſenting temptations, doth not imply a poſſibility of letting in the temptation, and ſo of erring, in all to whom he doth preſent things. For he preſented things to Chriſt, and yet it was impoſſible for that Spirit and nature that Chriſt was of, to let in his temptations.

But then, immediately in the next words he ſheweth, *How this poſſibility of falling is upon the enemy's preſenting to them the fruit of the tree of knowledge*; namely thus, *Their minds taking delight in it, and they feeding upon it, the enemy hath power to draw their minds out of Eden again.*

Rem. The regenerate and born of God, are partakers of the divine nature, and wait on God for living food, and receive it of him, and live by

it, and cannot abide dead, dry, notional food, nor feed upon it. Bleſſed be the Lord, there is that birth known, which can feed on nothing but life itſelf. And let the power of darkneſs preſent the fruit of the dead tree ever ſo often; the living babe will not meddle with it, but hungers and thirſts after righteouſneſs, and deſires the ſincere milk of the pure living word, that it may grow thereby. And if this holy nature be put into the babe, how much ſtronger is it in thoſe that are grown in truth, and who come to be naturalized into it, the contrary nature being crucified, and ſlain in them by the croſs of Chriſt, and the new and holy nature ruling in them?

Thirteenthly. He ſaith, *Wherefore I do believe that I ought not to ſubject myſelf to what the church impoſeth.*

Rem. The church of God under the law, walking in that outward covenant, was a glorious camp or body; and had outward power, according to the outward law, appertaining to it. And the church of God under the goſpel, walking with God according to the covenant of the goſpel, is a glorious, ſpiritual body, and hath inward power belonging to it; and though not the church merely as men, yet that Spirit and power in the church, ought to be obeyed by every member thereof, in things pertaining to God. So it was in the apoſtles days; they that were not diſorderly and unruly, were obedient to the Spirit and power of God in the apoſtles and churches then, 2 *Cor.* vii. 15. and *chap.* xxix. who had power to judge thoſe that were within, 1 *Cor.* v. 12. And thoſe that are indeed of God, will be obedient and ſubject to his Spirit and power in his church now. And there is nothing elſe deſired, but obedience to the Lord, as he moves, guides, leads and orders, both in the particular, and in the general.

His reaſons why he doth not believe that he ought to ſubject himſelf to what the church impoſeth, are theſe: *For then,* ſaith he, *I muſt believe that it is God in them, which doth impoſe thoſe yokes of bondage upon their brethren.*

Rem. The church is called into the liberty of the goſpel, and her children are born of the word immortal, and of the truth which makes free; and it is not the church's nature, either to receive or impoſe yokes of bondage, but to ſtand faſt, and to exhort all her members to ſtand faſt, in the liberty wherewith Chriſt hath made them free. But where there is any thing unruly, or contrary to the power, that is to be yoked down by the power.

And the particular waiting upon God in his Holy Spirit, light, and power; the Spirit, light, and power, will diſcover what is diſorderly, and unruly, and not of God in the particular, and lay a yoke upon it. The church alſo waiting upon God, in their meetings together in his name, the Lord will diſcover what is hurtful to the body, and contrary to the life of the body, and lay yokes upon it; and he that refuſeth this yoke, keeps alive that which is impure and fleſhly, and keeps down the juſt in himſelf.

But,

But, indeed, he that doth not believe God in his church, and that his Spirit, life, and power, ſits as King there; he is not in a capacity to obey aright, becauſe he doth not diſcern nor acknowledge that in the church, which alone is to be obeyed.

Another reaſon he gives is, *Becauſe* (he ſaith) *he muſt alſo then believe that the church is infallible, and cannot err.*

Rem. The Spirit of God is infallible, the power whereby the church was gathered and built up, is infallible. Chriſt is infallible, and hath given to his church of his infallible Spirit; without which they cannot be preſerved or act aright: and is the church in God fallible? And this Spirit will not fail them in their waiting upon him; and the church which is one with Chriſt, married to Chriſt, joined to Chriſt, partaketh of his holy, living, and infallible nature.

Judge in the truth, how it would ſuit: an holy head, an unholy body; a living head, a dead body; an infallible head, an elect and choſen head; but a body very liable to be deceived and err. Hath not the church that Spirit, that life, that power of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt her head with her, that is able to keep her from erring? And is it not her earneſt travail and deſire to keep to it herſelf, and to have all her members kept to it? And will not that power keep and preſerve all that keep to it?

He addeth further to the foregoing words, *Which thing I cannot believe, for then I muſt believe theſe particulars following.*

Firſt, *I muſt believe that they are as infallible as God is; and that it is as impoſſible for them to err, as it is for God to err.*

Anſw. No. A man may believe that God hath given to his church a glorious proportion of his Spirit, to dwell in them, and guide them, as his ſons, ſpouſe, and wife; and that they are married to him that is infallible, and partake of a bleſſed proportion of his nature; and yet not believe that they are as infallible as God is. The Lord is abſolutely infallible of himſelf; what infallibility the church hath, is by gift, by union, and communion with the Lord her huſband and Maker.

But doth he believe, or will he go about to maintain, that the church hath nothing of the infallible Spirit of her huſband? Or that ſhe is to act in a fallible ſpirit? Or that ſhe is to act nothing at all? But only direct men to the light and Spirit within, and let her members alone, though ſhe infallibly (by the infallible Spirit and power) know that they are deceived and err, and ſee (with the anointed eye) that they are going from, and acting contrary to, the light in their own particulars? If ſhe ſhould do ſo, ſhe would ſhew little care over her children, and ſmall regard or faithfulneſs to him, who hath entruſted her with his own Spirit and power, for edification and ſalvation, and not for deſtruction.

Secondly, *That no man or woman ſhall ever attain to any higher meaſure of the grace of God than they; and that they are come to the higheſt revelation that can be attainable by the Spirit of God.*

Anſw. The higheſt meaſure of life and of the Spirit is not neceſſary for the government of the church; but a true meaſure. And a true meaſure the Lord hath ordained for his church; and Chriſt, the Head, is not abſent from his church; but preſent with it, to ſupply with what wiſdom and power he ſeeth needful. And where is the attainment and growth in grace? Is it in the church, or out of the church? Doth not the Lord add to the church ſuch as ſhall be ſaved? And is not their growth there? And if any member be bleſſed, and grow ever ſo abundantly in grace, it is the growth of the church, and the church is glad of it. Now if it be a true growth, they would have unity with the church, and mind the peace of the church, and be ſubject to the Spirit and pure power of life in the church; elſe their growth is in another ſpirit, which the true church can never own.

Thirdly, *And that there is no more to be made known by the Spirit of God, in the ſons and daughters of men, but what already is made known to them.*

Anſw. The particular's owning a meaſure of life, of truth, of the Spirit and power, doth not argue there is no more to be made known or revealed in the particular. And the church's owning a fuller meaſure dwelling in the body than in any one particular (for the greateſt fullneſs in any particular doth but go to make up the largeneſs or fullneſs in the body), doth not argue that the church ſhall not grow, or be enlarged or filled as it grows. But if he intend the growth of any departing from the church, or out of the Spirit of life of the church, who hath her life from the Head, and is in unity with the Head, that growth we cannot but deny, finding it by conſtant trial and experience to be a growth in notion and comprehenſion, out of the feeling life and power.

Now this kind of growth I do not deſire ever to know; the Lord alſo preſerve others out of it, and open their ears to hear the voice of Chriſt, and of his church, that they may be preſerved out of it! For had this been hearkened and kept to, things had been better with many, as to their inward ſtate, and true peace with the Lord, than they have been.

Fourthly, *Or if there be any thing more to be revealed by the Spirit of God, that God will make it known to them, and to none elſe.*

Anſw. The true church doth not limit God where he ſhall reveal, or not reveal; but owneth God in whatever it reveals in any man upon the face of the earth. For being in unity with God's Spirit, and born of the immortal life, they are in the feeling ſenſe and knowledge of what came from the life in ages paſt, or in the preſent age, and are in unity with it; yet they know the Lord revealeth the myſtery of his truth and kingdom in the churches, and the growth is in the churches.

Now if any in Lucifer's nature will hearken to that ſpirit which deſpiſeth God's church, and rend from it, and think to grow above it, and expect this growth in their high notions and comprehenſions about things, in that exalted mind, ſhould be owned by the church, they will be miſtaken: for the true Spirit, which knows all things, and guides the church, will not guide

guide the church to own any ſuch ſpirit or growth; but to judge and condemn it in its greateſt ſpreading and exaltation.

There were thoſe in the apoſtle's days who would ſeem to be grown high, and to be ſpiritual, far above the apoſtles, and ſuch as lay low in the truth, and obeyed the holy commandments, and yet were far ſhort of their life, as may be ſeen abundantly in his epiſtles to the church of Corinth. But what ſaith the apoſtle concerning ſuch? *If any man think himſelf a prophet, or ſpiritual, let him acknowledge the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord*, 1 Cor. xii. 37. And did not he give commandments about thoſe that were unruly, and would not be ſubject to the order, power, and government of God's Spirit in the church? And did not the apoſtle ſay of unruly perſons, and vain talkers and deceivers, that mouths muſt be ſtopped? *Tit.* i. 10, 11. What! had the church or miniſters, in the firſt promulgation of the goſpel, power to ſtop mouths? Yea; in the Spirit that was in them, and with them, they knew which were the vain talkers, the unruly, and deceivers; and what mouths were to be ſtopped, and what power would ſtop them.

Fifthly, he ſaith, *Friends, I would have you ſeriouſly take into your conſideration ſome of your doctrines and principles which are commonly preached among us, how they can ſtand with God's ſovereignty, dominion, and glory, that either the ſeed or God ſhould ariſe in man?*

Rem. Chriſt preached a ſeed, even the kingdom, like a grain of muſtard-ſeed, and the ſeed ſown in man. Now if it was ſown in man, in his earthly heart, nature, and ſpirit, then the earth was over it, and did cover it, and it was to ſpring up or ariſe over and above the earth, and the pure power, wiſdom and glory of the Father to appear to be manifeſted in it.

Is this ſuch a ſtrange doctrine to him? Where are his ſpiritual ſenſes? How was he convinced? Was it without the feeling of the ſeed? If he truly felt it, where did he feel it? Did he not feel it in the earth? Was there not much over it?

I am ſure we, who were truly convinced, felt it ſo; felt the pure ſeed under ſuffering, the pure life under, the pure meaſure of truth under, and much of the earth over it, the Lamb ſlain inwardly by ſin and tranſgreſſion; and bleſſed be the Lord, we felt alſo the earth judged, and removed out of its place; the earth ploughed up, and the ſeed ſpringing over all that is earthly, and growing up in that which God made new, over that which was old.

And did not God ariſe outwardly, in the manifeſtation of his power outwardly, among the outward Jews? And doth not he ariſe inwardly, in the manifeſtation of his power inwardly, among the inward Jews? Are the enemies ever ſcattered inwardly till God's ariſing inwardly? What kind of convincement or growth hath that man been acquainted with, who never experienced theſe things?

Now

Now having propoſed this, he aſketh ſome queſtions, which as the Lord ſhall open my heart I may return anſwers to; not after a notional way, but as the Lord hath given me the knowledge, feeling, and experience of the thing.

His firſt queſtion is, *Whether the Light, or Spirit, Seed, and God, be not all one and the ſame thing?*

Anſw. God is the fullneſs, the ſeed is a meaſure and manifeſtation of him, the infinite fullneſs. And as he is light and Spirit, ſo the ſeed that comes from him, or that the good huſbandman ſows, is light and Spirit alſo.

His ſecond queſtion is, *How came this ſeed of God to be under, or beneath, in man?*

Anſw. Any man that knows the truth in holy experience, and hath been tempted, and let in ſin upon him, may know what comes then under, and how it comes under. The Spirit by ſin is grieved; yea, the Holy Spirit may be quenched, and man may crucify to himſelf the Lord of glory.

His third and fourth queſtions are, *What ſhall raiſe it up?* And, *By what?*

Anſw. to both. The power of God, the Spirit of God, the life of God, entering into its own in man, entering into the witneſs, raiſeth it up, brings that under which reſiſted, oppreſſed, and kept it down. The power of the Almighty, by his out-ſtretched arm, cruſheth Pharaoh inwardly, and brings his ſpiritual ſeed out of ſpiritual Egypt, Sodom, and Babylon; in all which the Lord, in all ages, hath inwardly and ſpiritually been crucified by them that have reſiſted his Holy Spirit in the pure manifeſtations thereof; for what is done to it, is done to him. *Saul, Saul, why perſecuteſt thou me?*

Laſtly, *Whether the appearance of God in man, to man by his Spirit, be not for the quickening and raiſing of man, both ſoul and body, out of a ſtate of bondage and captivity?*

Anſw. Yes, it is; but how doth God raiſe up man? Is it not by joining him to his ſeed, and cauſing him to bow to his ſeed, and ſuffer with his ſeed, and deny that which is contrary to his ſeed; ſo that the ſeed, which hath been grieved and burdened with ſin and iniquity, may riſe up over it, and cruſh the head of the ſerpent, in the authority, power, and dominion of the Father's life? Who of the redeemed-ones, that have witneſſed true redemption, have not witneſſed God bringing that up which was down, low, deep in the heart, and bringing that down, which was high and exalted over it?

But for the raiſing of God, that is but his miſrepreſentation of this ſound doctrine, and holy experience: for Chriſt himſelf, who was God, and the reſurrection and the life; yet the God-head was not raiſed in him, but the reſurrection and the life raiſed that body. And that of him which he ſoweth in us, and which differeth in the ſoul, through the ſoul's ſin, he raiſeth up

in

in his own holy dominion, in them that come to ſuffer with it, and to bear the croſs with that which crucifieth ſin.

This is ſound doctrine, and ſound experience, univerſally experienced by all that know the inward truth, and have ſubjected to it. They have felt what truth was, and where it was; and what it is, and where it is; and what they are in it, and by it; bleſſings and praiſes over all unto him, who by the working of his moſt glorious power, hath brought this about in a remnant whom the Lord hath viſited, and ſhewn mercy to.

Let him wait for true underſtanding from him who is able to give it, and anſwer me this one queſtion then, *Doth not the devil, the enemy of mankind, hunt after the precious life, even in thoſe that come to witneſs redemption in meaſure from him? And if at any time they hearken to his temptations, and let him in, doth not the life receive a wound? Is not the Spirit grieved? Is not the tender, righteous, living plant hurt?*

Oh! the tender mercy of God to permit his truth, his ſeed, his Son, not only to ſuffer for man without the gates of Jeruſalem, but alſo to ſuffer in man, even in the ſtreets of Sodom, where our Lord was in ages paſt crucified, and is ſpiritually crucified to this day! *Rev.* xi. 8.

He ſaith, *The kingdom of heaven is within all men and women, and heaven is above hell, and the light is above darkneſs*, p. 7.

Rem. If he mean that their nature is ſo, I grant it; but if he mean that heaven, or the light which is heavenly, is uppermoſt in men who are under the kingdom and power of darkneſs, he is utterly miſtaken: for in the kingdom where Satan and antichriſt reign, antichriſt is there exalted (in that heart) above all that is called God; even above the light, Spirit, and power which ought to be worſhipped and obeyed there, but is not: and there is need of the arm and power of God to be awakened, and to put on ſtrength there, to cut Rahab, wound the Dragon, and bring him under, and to bring up the ſeed into his heavenly authority, dominion, and power (which is due unto it) in that heart.

He ſaith, *The ſeed is to redeem, and not to be redeemed.*

Rem. This is true, relating to the ſeed, as it is in itſelf: but as God has beſtowed it on man, given it as a gift in man, and it condeſcends to his condition, deſcending into the lower parts of the earth, and ſuffering with man, that it might bring man into its death and ſufferings, and ſo raiſe him in and with itſelf; ſo the mighty power of life, from whence it came, is to be revealed in it, and bring it out of Egypt, and the darkneſs wherein it finds man, and in the tender love of God to man, bears a ſhare with him. It is not only the Jew outwardly that pierced Chriſt, but the ſoul inwardly by tranſgreſſion pierceth his life and Spirit; and as it comes to true ſenſe and faith, looks upon him whom it hath pierced by ſin, and mourns bitterly over him, and turns from and hates that ſin whereby it pierced him.

He ſaith, *The ſeed in both man and woman is both God and Chriſt, and is above the ſeed of the ſerpent in all, and he is in himſelf*, &c. *p.* 7.

Rem.

Rem. Who denies that God and Chriſt, and the holy ſeed, which are one in nature, though not in meaſure and fullneſs, as he is in himſelf, is above the ſeed of the ſerpent?

He addeth further, *Neither hath man's mind been ſo blinded, that he could not ſee his ſins by the light*, P. 8. L. 38. (as corrected by the errata.)

Rem. There is an eye that the God of this world blinds, that it may not ſee the glorious ſhinings of the light, 2 *Cor.* iv. 3, 4. And the eye that is blind cannot ſee, till God opens it. The outward eye cannot ſee the ſhining of the outward ſun, but as it is opened; nor can the inward eye ſee inward things, but as the Lord opens it. Paul was ſent to the Gentiles, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkneſs to light, *Acts* xxvi. 18. So that man's eye is blinded, that though the light ſhine in the darkneſs, yet he cannot ſee, nor walk in the way of the light, but as God anoints and opens his eye; *anoint thine eyes with eye-ſalve, that thou mayeſt ſee*, Rev. iii. 18.

But I beſeech him, in the tender bowels of love, to conſider where his ſtanding is, and what it is in him that brings forth theſe things; for I am ſure it is not the true light, where-with God hath ſhined in the hearts of his people, and doth ſhine at this day. He miſtakes the true light in others, and calls it darkneſs; and alſo miſtakes the darkneſs in himſelf, and calls it light: and whither, after this rate, may he wander in his uncertain notions and comprehenſions; and while he is thus talking of God, and heaven, and the light within, let him take heed leſt he be found among them who blaſpheme God, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven?

What I have hitherto took notice of, may ſufficiently manifeſt, even to himſelf, could he retire low enough, where the true underſtanding and knowledge is given, how he hath erred from the true light, and but pretended to it, and not been led by it, in what he hath now writ.

As for the other part of his book, though I could ſay much to it, if the Lord did require me; yet finding it chiefly to be matter of notion and criticiſm, my heart is not engaged to meddle with it; for it is not in me, to bring people into ſuch critical diſputes, about an inviſible man, or inviſible woman, or who was the firſt inviſible man; which one while he ſeems to call God or Chriſt, another while the ſon of perdition, or power of darkneſs, the firſt inviſible man, as *page* 21. for which I am ſatisfied, he can produce no ſcripture; which he requires of friends, for what they aſſert.

I muſt confeſs, I ſee no profit in his meddling with ſuch things, but rather a drawing the minds of the people into forbidden knowledge, and airy comprehenſion about the heavenly things, and feeding that part in themſelves which ſhould not thus be ſuffered to fly aloft, but be kept under.

And happy were it for him, if he could feel the truth, ſeed, and life (which is grieved in him), riſe above them, trample them down, and reign over

over them: but he muſt experience great humility, and a long travel, before he can come to witneſs this.

As for his denying himſelf to be of us; indeed he hath ſufficiently manifeſted by this book, and by his ſtrange notions and comprehenſions therein, that he is not of us; but a ſtranger to that life, ſpirit and power, which hath gathered, guideth, and preſerveth us out of ſuch paths as theſe.

And oh! that he did not hug ſo many notions (and thoſe very ſtrange ones too, contrary to the truth and holy experience, in the hearts of God's redeemed ones, and the holy ſcriptures, as hath been already ſhewed), and get ſuch comprehenſions into his brain, concerning the ſaving power; but wait to deſcend, and come down thither, where he may feel it in his heart, and that will preſerve him, for the future, from ſuch contradictions and confuſions, which the other part of his book is alſo too full of; which, if the Lord pleaſe, he may draw forth ſome other to lay open, for the vindication of truth, and its true teſtimony, from his ſpirit and falſe teſtimony, uttered in very ſtrange and extravagant expreſſions; not at all ſuitable to the nature of truth, but rather to the nature of that dark ſpirit from whence it came; which the Lord of his tender mercy manifeſt to him, and redeem him from, into a tender, living, humble ſenſe of the meek and lowly principle of life in the heart.

POSTSCRIPT.

SINCE the writing of the former, and my not intending to meddle with the reſt, there hath ſomething lain upon me, as to ſome few paſſages therein alſo, to write a few words, by way of teſtimony to one or two particulars therein: but that which mainly lay upon me, was ſomewhat in relation to his Poſtſcript; he looking upon it as ſo unanſwerable, and yet ſo plain and clear an anſwer ariſing to it in my heart.

Firſt, As to his main controverſy with friends, about the *Chriſt that died at Jeruſalem* (he affirming, *That neither juſtification nor condemnation is by him*; and reproaching friends, *as having gone back to the profeſſors Chriſt and Saviour, who died without the gates of Jeruſalem*, as page 17. 21. 26.); this is in my heart to ſay:

Rem. Is Chriſt divided? Is there one Chriſt that died without the gates of Jeruſalem, and another that did not die? Or is it not the ſame Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who died without the gates of Jeruſalem, according to the fleſh, and yet was then alive in the Spirit? Do we affirm that the God-head died? (No, we do not ſo much as affirm, *that his ſoul died*, as he doth, *page* 19.) but according to the fleſh he died; that is, he who was the reſurrection, and the life, laid down his life, and took it up again, according to the commandment of his Father.

Thus we have been taught of God to believe, and thus to hold it forth. And we have no other juſtifier, condemner, Saviour, or interceſſor, than he that laid down the life of the body, offering it up a ſacrifice to his Father, without the gates of Jeruſalem. *Who is he that juſtifieth?* Is it not God, in and through him? And, *Who is he that condemneth? Is it* not *Chriſt that died?* And where did he die? Was it not without the gates of Jeruſalem? *Yea rather, that is riſen again*, &c. *Rom.* viii. 33, 34.

Secondly, The next thing that lies upon me to take notice of, is writing againſt ſenſe, and diſowning the exhortation to come to a ſenſe, and to wait in a ſenſe, and abide in a ſenſe, *&c.* as *page* 25.

Rem. Though I have given a touch at this already, in the foregoing part, yet there is ſomewhat more lies upon me. The inward man, the new man, the ſpiritual man, hath inward and ſpiritual ſenſes. Chriſt's ſheep have ſpiritual ears to hear his voice with; and a ſpiritual eye is given to the ſpiritual man, to ſee him who otherwiſe is inviſible.

There is alſo a ſpiritual taſte to ſavour and diſtinguiſh between that which is living, and that which is dead; between that which is corrupt and unwholeſome, and that which is wholeſome food: and by the exerciſe of theſe ſenſes, the children of God become more and more ſkilful in diſcerning between good and evil, *Heb.* v. 14. And in this living ſenſe, the elect cry unto God againſt their enemies, and are heard and preſerved by him, and ſhall in due time be fully delivered, *Luke* xviii. 7, 8.

The truly living are truly ſenſible. Indeed, if he could take away the ſenſe of life, and the judgment of life from God's people, it were an eaſy matter to deceive them with ſuch kind of notions and comprehenſions, as he hath brought forth in this his book. But the Lord hath given a living ſenſe or ſenſes to his, and pure living judgment therein; which their minds being kept to, it is impoſſible for this ſpirit, or any ſuch like, with all its inchantments, to prevail upon them, becauſe the ſheep's ear knows the ſound and voice of life, from the ſound and voice of death, let antichriſt transform in any of his miniſters ever ſo myſteriouſly.

He ſaith, *God is not a ſenſe, nor is his Spirit a ſenſe.*

Rem. It is not for him, in his notional way, to ſay what God is; he that made the eye, ſhall not he ſee? He that made the ear, ſhall not he hear? Doth he beget his children into a living ſenſe, and beſtow living ſenſes upon them? And hath not he the thing in himſelf much more?

But let me aſk him this queſtion; did God, the holy begetter of life, ever beget him into a living ſenſe? If not, he was never of us; if the Lord did, let him wait to be begotten ſo again, and he ſhall ſoon be one of us again, and judge in the true Spirit, life, and power, what he hath here writ and publiſhed abroad in the wrong; and he ſhall no longer believe, that this his writing was written from the teſtimony of Jeſus in him (as he expreſſeth, *page* 21.), but ſhall experience the life of Jeſus condemning it in his own heart, as I am ſure it hath done and doth in mine, and cannot but

but do in all that have been gathered to, and abide in, that which keepeth livingly ſenſible.

Thirdly, The third thing, and that which moſt lies upon me, is that charge of his upon friends, *That they do ſhew more homage, reverence, and obedience to the form outwardly, than to the power of God inwardly; and that they worſhip the form beyond the power, becauſe they keep their hats on when they wait and worſhip in ſilence; but in public prayer, both men and women either ſtand up, or elſe kneel down, and the men all put off their hats: herein* (he ſaith) *they worſhip, reverence, and adore the form outwardly; and the words, more than the word of life in their hearts*, &c. *This practice he would have them vindicate, if they can: Indeed he hath ſufficiently condemned it, and more than God hath allowed him to do, or will juſtify him in.*

Rem. The thing is nakedly and plainly thus; the great God, by the arm of his power, hath gathered a people to himſelf, and taught them to worſhip him in his own Spirit and truth; yea, he hath taught us to be continually retired, and upon our watch, and in his fear; eyeing and regarding him in all we do.

Beſides this, he hath appointed us ſolemn times of meeting together, to worſhip him; in which times we do, in a more ſolemn, and after a more eſpecial manner, retire to feel his preſence with us, and holy Spirit and power working in our hearts, and miniſtering to us. And, bleſſed be the Lord, he is ſtill found, according to his promiſe, in the midſt of us; and doth give us pure breatheings after him, and pure ſenſe of him, and pure praiſes to him; even praiſes from, and in, that which is pure.

Yet, while we are ſitting thus waiting, or when breathings or praiſes ariſe, we are not taught or required of the Lord to pull off our hats, or kneel on our knees.

But when the Lord moveth and calleth any forth (for the aſſembly, or in the name and on the behalf of the aſſembly) to offer prayer or praiſes to God; then, to ſignify our unity in the Spirit, and our joint reverence to our God, we are moved either to kneel, or ſtand, as the Lord ſhall incline our hearts, and to uncover our heads before him. And in this we do not adore the form, as our God knoweth and beareth witneſs; but him who hath taught us the form, and who teacheth us to continue therein, and juſtifieth us in the uſe and practice thereof.

And what ſpirit is this that condemneth us after this vaunting manner, as if he had brought forth ſuch a manifeſt evidence of our adoring the form, as could not be anſwered?

The laſt thing which lies on me to take notice of, is thoſe words about the cloſe of his poſtſcript; *I have yet another book, that is written in and from the Spirit of God; the tendency of which book is, for the overthrowing of all antichriſt's miniſters in this nation*, &c.

Rem. This teſtimony lies on my heart concerning him, that he is not in a condition, or capacity, to write or ſpeak in or from God's Spirit. He may

pretend to have written this, or to write another book, from God's Spirit, but he doth but take the name of the Lord in vain in ſo doing, and the Spirit of the Lord will without doubt, through ſome of thoſe that are in him that is true, give a ſure and certain ſound, and teſtimony, againſt his falſe pretences.

Oh! that he could indeed think, or write, or ſpeak againſt antichriſt's miniſters, and againſt the ſpirit of antichriſt; which if ever he be able from God to do, he muſt firſt ſee how antichriſt hath prevailed over him, and darkened him, and how he dwelleth and reigneth in his heart, as if he were God; yea, he muſt deny his preſent light and ſpirit, and call it no more Chriſt; but feel that which is now little and low in him riſe (through his ſenſe of it, and ſubjection to it) over that which is now ſo high, and ſo exalted above the meaſure of truth in his own heart; which, if it were ſo, or might once be ſo, how glad would my ſoul be for his ſake, which is now grieved to ſee him ſo lifted up, and ſo miſtaken, and ſo deeply to err, both concerning himſelf, and God's people, church, and miniſters, and concerning God's light and Spirit; denying, debaſing, and caſting down that, to exalt himſelf; that ſo he might ſet up the wrong inſtead of the right, and be juſtified and owned by the one, ſeeing he cannot by the other!

The Lord, if it be his will, in tender mercy to him, bring him down from his high ſeat, and exalt that holy blood of the covenant, which is now trampled under foot by him, that his ſoul may be ſaved, and not periſh for ever (in the day that never ſhall have end) from the preſence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. *Amen.*

SOME

SOME

MISREPRESENTATIONS of ME,

CONCERNING

CHURCH-GOVERNMENT, cleared.

AND THE

POWER and AUTHORITY of GOD'S SPIRIT, in Governing his CHURCH, teſtified to.

By one whom it hath pleaſed the Lord to make a Member of the Church, which he hath gathered, and preſerveth by his own Almighty Arm; who accounteth it his Duty and Honour in the Lord, to be ſubject to the Government and Ordering of his Spirit and Power in his Church,

ISAAC PENINGTON.

That ye ſubmit yourſelves unto ſuch, and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboureth, 1 COR. xvi. 16.

Obey them that have the rule over you, and ſubmit yourſelves; for they watch for your ſouls, as they that muſt give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief; for that is unprofitable for you, HEB. xiii. 17.

Likewiſe, ye younger, ſubmit yourſelves unto the elder; yea, all of you be ſubject one to another, and be cloathed with humility: for God reſiſteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble, 1 PETER v. 5.

And be not drunk with wine, wherein is exceſs: but be filled with the Spirit, and ſubmitting yourſelves one to another in the fear of God, EPHES. v. 18. 21.

THE PREFACE.

UPON occaſion of the ſuffering of our dear friends and brethren in New-England, cruel impriſonments, many hard uſages, and at laſt (ſome of them) death itſelf, for their obedience and faithful teſtimony to the Lord, and his precious truth; and becauſe of the undue covering thereof, by the grounds and cauſes produced to juſtify their proceedings; I was engaged to ſhew the nakedneſs and unreaſonableneſs thereof, in a book, intituled, "An Examination of the Grounds or Cauſes, which are ſaid to "induce the Court of Boſton in New-England, to make that Order or Law "of Baniſhment upon pain of Death againſt the QUAKERS, &c." Whereunto ſomewhat was added (being very proper to the ſubject in hand) about the authority and government which Chriſt excluded out of his church, which alſo occaſioned ſomewhat concerning the true church-government.

Now this latter part (about church-government) hath been ſo miſrepreſented, as if, becauſe the wrong church-government was excluded, the excluſion of all church-government was intended by me, there being no notice taken of my owning the true church-government, but only ſome paſſages of my diſowning the falſe produced, as if they intended to overturn and deny all church-government, which never was intended by me: for in that very book, which is thus made uſe of, I did poſitively affirm the neceſſity and uſe of the true church-government, which may more fully appear in that which hereafter follows.

SOME.

SOME MISREPRESENTATIONS of ME, CONCERNING CHURCH-GOVERNMENT, &c.

FOR the manifeſting that I am miſrepreſented, and the clearing of my innocency from thoſe miſrepreſentations, this is on my heart;

Firſt, To ſet down thoſe words which John Pennyman hath cited out of that part of my book which ſpeaks of the authority and government which Chriſt excluded out of his church.

Secondly, To add ſomewhat, in way of confirmation of that truth and tender ſenſe, which was then upon my heart.

Thirdly, To propoſe ſome queſtions, as I ſhall find them ariſe in my heart, further to open and manifeſt the intent of my heart in this thing.

Fourthly, To annex ſomewhat, which is mentioned and immediately added in the very ſame part of the book, concerning true church-government; which plainly manifeſteth that I was not againſt the true church government, nor did mention or intend any of thoſe things to hinder, deny, or oppoſe the true church-government, of which I do there infer an abſolute neceſſity.

Fifthly, It is on my heart to add a few conſiderations further, concerning the neceſſity, uſefulneſs, and benefit of the true church-government.

The firſt words John Pennyman cites out of this part of my book, concerning the authority and government which Chriſt excluded out of his church, from *Matt.* xx. 25. to 29. are theſe.

Here

Here Christ cuts off that power and authority, which grows up in the corrupt nature of man, which was ever and anon springing up even in the disciples; here he wholly excludes it out of his church, and saith expresly, he would have no such thing amongst them, no such kind of greatness, no such kind of authority.

Confirm. It is the full belief of my heart, that Christ hath cut off that power and authority which grows up in the corrupt nature of man, and wholly excluded it out of his church, even very expresly in this forecited scripture; plainly signifying therein, that he would have no such kind of greatness, no such kind of authority among his gathered and chosen people.

Quest. But doth this signify or imply, that he would have no authority at all? Doth this exclude the authority and government of his Spirit and power in his church? Doth not he, notwithstanding this, say, *Go tell the church?* And enjoin the members of the church to hear the church, upon the penalty of being accounted Heathens and publicans? And did not the Holy Ghost make and appoint overseers over the church? *Acts* xx. 28. And what is an overseer? Or in what were they to oversee? Were they not to oversee in the true light, to which every child of light is to be subject? And they that did resist the light, Spirit, and power of the Holy Ghost in any of the overseers; were they not unruly, and departers from the light in themselves; though they might pretend they were still for the light, and that it was the overseers that were departed and erred from it?

The next Words he cites are these:

TWO things are here excluded by Christ, from whence all the mischief ariseth in the church, all the tyranny and oppression of mens consciences, and of their persons, estates and liberties for conscience-sake. First, *Greatness:* Secondly, *The exercising dominion and authority by those that would be great therein.*

Confirm. It is my belief, that all the mischief in the church, tyranny, and oppression of mens consciences, and of their persons, estates, and liberties for conscience-sake, doth arise from a wrong greatness, and from the exercising of a wrong dominion and authority, by those that would be great therein; and that these two things are here excluded by Christ, in the forementioned scripture.

Quest. But is there not a true greatness? Those that lie low before the Lord, and have humbled themselves under his mighty hand; doth not the Lord exalt them in due time, filling them with his Spirit, life, virtue, and power? And is not that great in them? And are they not highly favoured, and exalted in the eye of the Lord therein? (Oh! none knows how great those are in the eye of the Lord, who are poor and low, and nothing in their

their own eyes!) And is there not a true authority and dominion of God's Spirit in the church in general, as well as in the particular, over the ſpirit and power of darkneſs? Becauſe of which Spirit, becauſe of which power, becauſe of which holy authority and dominion, the gates of hell ſhall not be able to prevail againſt it.

His next citation is this (which though ſomewhat long, I am willing to recite punctually, that my innocency may the more appear.)

THIS ſpirit muſt be kept out from amongſt you, this aſpiring ſpirit, this lofty, ruling ſpirit, which loves to be great, which loves to have dominion, which would exalt itſelf becauſe of the gifts it hath received, and would bring others into ſubjection; this ſpirit muſt be ſubdued amongſt Chriſt's diſciples, or it will ruin all. The Lord gives grace and knowledge for another end, than for men to take upon them to be great, and rule over others becauſe of it. And he, that becauſe of this, thinks himſelf fit to rule over other mens conſciences, and to make them bow to what he knows, or takes to be truth, he loſeth his own life thereby; and ſo far as he prevails upon others, he doth but deſtroy their life too. Therefore the diſciples, or church of Chriſt, are to watch over every ſuch ſpirit; to beat it down, to teſtify againſt it, to turn from it, to lay it flat, to put it in its proper place, that is, beneath all, and ſo not to ſuffer it to ariſe.

Before I come to the confirmation of this, I judge it meet to ſet down the foregoing clauſe or paragraph omitted by him, which will very much help to clear the naked drift and intent of theſe words. The foregoing paragraph runs thus:

Such a kind of greatneſs as is in the world, is the deſtruction of the life of Chriſt; and ſuch a kind of dominion and authority as is among the nations, is a direct overturning of the kingdom of Chriſt. It ſets up another power than Chriſt's, another greatneſs than Chriſt's, another kind of authority than Chriſt's; and ſo eats out the virtue and life of his kingdom, and makes it juſt like one of the kingdoms of this world.

This (which immediately went before) being thus added, may ſufficiently open the thing of itſelf. Yet for further ſatisfaction, I ſhall add a confirmation to the truth of that which he hath cited; and that in ſeveral particulars, becauſe of the length of the citation.

Confirm. Firſt, An aſpiring ſpirit, a lofty, ruling ſpirit, which loves to be great, which loves to have dominion, which would exalt itſelf, *&c.* muſt be kept out from among the diſciples and church of Chriſt. There muſt not be ſuch a ſpirit, or loving to be great, or ſuch a ruling among them,

as is in the world. No; life alone, the Spirit alone, the humble seed alone, the truth alone, the grace alone, must rule among them; and God forbid the authority and government thereof should be stopt in any. It cannot be well with the church that it should be so, that God's Spirit should be grieved or quenched, or stopped in its holy way of governing and ordering the church of its own building.

Second, That which would exalt itself because of the gifts it hath received, and would bring others into subjection; this spirit must be subdued among Christ's disciples, or it will ruin all. God alone, Christ alone, the Spirit alone, the truth alone, the seed alone, is to be exalted in the church; not flesh, not self, not the aspiring, lofty, ruling spirit.

Third, The Lord gives grace and knowledge for another end, than for men to take upon them to be great, and rule over others because of it. Man, without grace and true knowledge, is high and exalted, and would be ruling over, and subjecting others; but true grace and knowledge brings man down, and keeps him low, even out of every desire of aspiring and ruling over others, in earnest breatheings and endeavours that both the grace and spirit may teach and rule both over himself and others.

Fourth, Because God hath given a man knowledge, he must not take upon him to rule over others with his knowledge. Christ did not rule over his disciples with his knowledge, nor require them to believe what he knew to be truth. Nor may any man at this day, though ever so full of God's holy Spirit and power, take upon him (above what his Lord and master did) to rule over other mens consciences. If he do, he will do it out of the leadings of life, and of God's holy Spirit; and so will wound and hurt his own life thereby; and so far as herein he prevails on others, he will hurt their life too.

Fifth, Therefore this spirit (which Christ never was of himself, nor encouraged in his disciples) the church is to watch over, beat down, testify against, turn from, lay flat, and keep beneath all, and so not suffer it to arise.

Quest. But doth all this hinder, deny, or oppose Christ's Spirit, Christ's power, Christ's truth and grace from arising in the church, in a way of spiritual and holy government? Because man is not to aspire, nor take upon him to reign or rule, because of grace, gifts, or knowledge received; shall not therefore the head govern the body? Shall not life, and truth, and the wisdom of God, spring in the church, to order and govern the church? But must every man be left to the dictates of what he calls light in him, and not be reproved or testified against, though the Spirit of God manifest it (to them that are indeed in the light, life, Spirit, and power) that it is not light, as persons may pretend and imagine; but real darkness, gross darkness, darkness that may be felt, even by the least babes that are in the true, living sense?

The

The next Citation.

IF this rule of Christ had been kept to, antichrist's power could never have got up, nor the poor innocent lambs so often have been worried by the wolves.

Confirm. It is most certainly true, if the wrong authority and government had been kept down; if the aspiring, lofty spirit, which exalts itself, and loves to have the preheminence over that which it should be subject to both in itself and others, had been judged, beat down, denied, turned from, &c. how could the spirit of antichrist, which is the spirit that would be exalting itself above all that is indeed of God, have got up? This is the wolf that worries the lambs; and if this power and spirit be kept out of the church, how can there be any wolf found there, to worry the innocent lambs and sheep of Christ?

Quest. But did ever antichrist's power get up by the exercise of the power of Christ in his church? Doth not that power turn against antichrist, and keep out antichrist? Did that power ever worry the lambs? Nay, rather doth it not cherish, feed, build up, and preserve the lambs? And is it possible but antichrist's power should get up, unless this power be watched to, and observed, in its ordering and governing the church, and discovering the subtil working of the wolfish spirit of antichrist; which appears in the sheep's cloathing, and may pretend to the light within, that it might draw men from that which is indeed the light within, into that which is indeed darkness in the sight of the Lord, and in the sight of all that are kept truly living and sensible by him?

The next Citation.

THE great work of the ministers of Christ, is to keep the conscience open to Christ, and to preserve men from receiving any truths as from them, further than the Spirit opens, or to imitate any of their practices, further than the Spirit leads, guides, and persuades them; for persons are exceeding prone to receive things as truths, from those they have an high opinion of, and to imitate their practices, and so hurt their own growth, and endanger their souls.

Confirm. When the minister of Christ comes with the gospel of Christ, he finds men in darkness, with their consciences defiled, with the door of the heart shut against Christ. Now his great work is to turn them to the light, Spirit, and power, whereby their hearts may be opened, their consciences washed, and there may be a ready entrance for Christ's Spirit and power

into them. Then the conſcience being opened to Chriſt, their great endeavour, labour, and work, is to keep it open, and that that may not be let in again by them, which will ſhut it againſt Chriſt. For as there is one ſpirit opens to Chriſt, ſo there is another will ſhut, even after the heart and conſcience is opened, if a man hearken to it.

And the way of receiving truth, is in the evidence and demonſtration of God's Spirit in one's own particular; and this is for ever the aim and care of the miniſters of Chriſt to keep men to, and not to allure men to receive truths as from them, but from Chriſt; or to imitate their practices, further than the Spirit leads, guides, and perſuades them. For the miniſters of Chriſt are ſenſible how exceeding prone perſons are to receive things as truths, from thoſe they have an high opinion of; and to imitate their practices, and ſo hurt their own growth, and endanger their ſouls. Now it lies on my heart to teſtify, upon this occaſion, that I have found the miniſters of Chriſt, whom I have converſed with in this age, walk ſo towards me and others, ſtill turning me to that light, Spirit, and truth in my own particular, wherein the knowledge of truth was to be given me by the Lord, and not impoſing upon me that which they knew to be truth, before the Lord had prepared and fitted my heart for the knowledge thereof. And this is ſtill the courſe and practice of the miniſters of Chriſt to this day.

Queſt. But muſt not the miniſter of Chriſt, who is ordained of God to watch for the ſoul, watch againſt that, which (if hearkened to by any particular) will ſhut the conſcience againſt Chriſt, and open it to another ſpirit, who is often working in a myſtery to deceive it? And if they ſee the workings of this other ſpirit in any, ought they not, in faithfulneſs to Chriſt, and to the ſouls of ſuch, to warn them of it? And if any, having let in the wrong ſpirit, turn from, and deny, the practices which the Lord once taught them (and wherein the teſtimony of truth ſtands) into practices which are of the world, and anſwer the world's ſpirit, and tend to weaken the faithful teſtimonies of others in the true light and Spirit; ought the miniſter of Chriſt to leave theſe perſons to their openneſs to a wrong ſpirit, and wrong practices, wherein they deny the Lord that bought them and enlightened them, and are ſhut up againſt the viſitations and teſtimonies of God's true Spirit and power in his children, who keep their habitations in that light which theſe are departed from, though they make ever ſo great pretences to it?

The next Citation.

AH poor hearts! how ſimply do they come thither where they once taſted refreſhment, to find wholeſome advice, not ſuſpecting what is got up there ſince; and ſo give dominion to a wrong thing, and take directions from a wrong ſpirit, and betray their own ſimplicity? Therefore the main thing is to keep the conſcience pure to the Lord, and not to take things for truths

becauſe

because others see them to be truths, but to wait till the Spirit makes them manifest to me; nor to run into worships, duties, performances, or practices, because others are led thither, but to wait till the Spirit lead me thither. He that makes haste to be rich (even in religion, running into knowledge, and into worships and performances before he feel a true and clear evidence) shall not be innocent, nor the Lord will not hold him guiltless, when he comes to visit for spiritual adultery and idolatry.

Confirm. This hath been experienced in this our day, more than once; when some, having departed from the power whereby the innocent lambs had tasted sweet nourishment and refreshment through them, and have come afterwards for that which is wholesome, not suspecting what was got up in them since, and so gave dominion to a wrong thing, and took directions from a wrong spirit, and betrayed their own simplicity.

Quest. But had these resorted to the church, and waited for judgment from the church, to whom God has given eyes to see, in such cases as may pass the eye-sight of the particular, and a mouth to speak; might not the church have been instrumental to have opened the true eye in them also, and so have preserved them from being infected, by any that ran out from the truth in their own particulars, and lost their habitation therein? And mark, when the church was in its great glory, cloathed with the sun, and the moon under its feet, and crowned with a crown of twelve stars, yet the dragon, even then, might prevail upon some stars, and with his tail sweep them down from their place; but the church he could not prevail upon. The gates of hell, the power of the dragon, the mouth of the dragon, nay the tail of the dragon (which what if I should say is the false prophet within) cannot.

Further Confirm. Indeed, the main thing is to keep the conscience pure to the Lord. To bring men to that which purifies the conscience, and to keep them to it, this is the great work. Men must not take things for truths, because others see them to be truths (that is not God's way, nor did his ministers ever so teach) but to wait till God's Spirit makes them manifest to the particular. Nor must men run into worships, duties, performances, or practices, because others are led thither, but wait till the Spirit lead every one in his own particular thither.

Quest. Where is the faithful minister that teacheth otherwise, or practiseth otherwise at this day? I am sure I never met with any thing of this nature from any of them, but only one that ran out in his own particular, who first endeavoured to draw me from esteeming or taking directions from others, and then would have given me directions himself, and would speak and undertake to prophesy great things of me, that he might have raised up that part in me, which could have answered him. And though he himself be dead, yet his spirit is alive in others at this day, which the Lord discover and preserve his people from!

Further

Further Confirm. It is not good to make haſte to be rich (no not in religion): He that rightly believeth, and abideth in the true and living faith, makes not haſte to run into knowledge, worſhips, and performances, before he feel his guide! but rather chuſeth to be as a weaned child, lying low before the Lord, in brokenneſs of ſpirit, and not meddling with things too high for him; and ſo he is kept in innocency, poverty, and humility before the Lord, and preſerved out of the bed of the ſtranger (the ſtrange ſpirit and power), and ſo not judged or condemned by the Lord, for either ſpiritual adultery or idolatry.

Queſt. But he that lets in a wrong ſpirit, that miſtakes about the light in him, and judgeth that which is indeed darkneſs to be it, and errs from the true church, and denies the authority of God's Spirit and power in it, and is not preſerved thereby, but entangled and bewitched with this wrong ſpirit, and in it teſtifies againſt the true church and the true Spirit, and the miniſtry and miniſters of Chriſt; is not he joined to the ſpirit of whoredom in his own particular? And hath not he ſet up an idol in his own heart, inſtead of the true light there? And doth not he worſhip and obey that idol, that wrong ſpirit, that wrong power? And will not the Lord viſit and judge him for his ſpiritual adultery and idolatry from the true?

The next Citation.

IN the apoſtles days, Chriſtians were too apt to ſtrive after a wrong unity and uniformity in outward practices and obſervations, and to judge one another unrighteouſly in theſe things. And mark, it is not the different practice from one another that breaks the peace and unity, but the judging one another becauſe of differing practices. He that keeps not a day, may unite in the ſame Spirit, in the ſame life, in the ſame love with him that keeps a day; and he who keeps a day, may unite in heart and ſoul with the ſame Spirit and life in him who keeps not a day; but he that judgeth the other becauſe of either of theſe, errs from the Spirit, from the love, from the life, and ſo breaks the bond of unity. And he that draws another to any practice, before the life in his own particular lead him, doth as much as in him lies to deſtroy the ſoul of that perſon. This was the apoſtle's rule, for every one to perform ſingly to the Lord what he did, and not for one to meddle with the light or conſcience of another, &c. *but every one to keep cloſe to their own meaſure,* &c. *and here is the true unity in the Spirit, in the inward life, and not in an outward uniformity; that was not neceſſary in the apoſtles days, nor is it neceſſary now: and that eye, which ſo dotes upon it, overlooks the one thing which is neceſſary.*

Confirm. This is ſo manifeſt from that ſcripture quoted by me, which is here omitted, that he that ſhall read that ſcripture, which is *Rom.* xiv. may eaſily obſerve the apoſtle affirming and teaching theſe things.

That

That even in the apoſtles days, Chriſtians were too apt to ſtrive after a wrong unity and uniformity in outward practices and obſervations, and to judge one another unrighteouſly in theſe things, is manifeſt from the ſeveral inſtructions and exhortations given to this church, in this *chap.* as *ver.* 2, 3, 4. *One believeth that he may eat all things; another who is weak eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth, deſpiſe him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not, judge him that eateth: for God hath received him. Who art thou that judgeſt another man's ſervant? To his own maſter he ſtandeth or falleth; yea, he ſhall be holden up, for God is able to make him ſtand.*

Yea, in matters of worſhip (as keeping and obſerving a day to God, or not keeping it) it is not the different practice from one another that breaks the peace, but the judging of one another, becauſe of differing practices. So the apoſtle plainly holds forth, *ver.* 5, 6. *One man eſteemeth one day above another; another eſteemeth every day. Let every man be fully perſuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.*

And he that draws another to any practice, before the life in his own particular lead him, doth as much as in him lies to deſtroy the ſoul of that perſon. So the apoſtle ſignifies, *ver.* 5. (which was quoted in my book) in that he ſaith, *Deſtroy not him with thy meat*, for whom Chriſt died. So that not an outward uniformity in all things, but an unity in the one Spirit and life, is the neceſſary thing. And there may be unity, and love, and life, and peace, without an uniformity in practice, further than the Spirit of God teacheth and leadeth his unto.

Queſt. But if the Lord hath taught a man, opened the ſame eye in him that he opened in others, and brought him into unity and uniformity with the church, in the practices which the Lord hath taught it; and he afterwards let in another ſpirit, and fall from theſe practices, and judge the very church itſelf for continuing in them; may not the church teſtify to this perſon, that he is erred from his guide, hath loſt the light in himſelf, and ſo judgeth amiſs, both concerning himſelf and concerning the church of God? This hath been the ſtate of ſome who went out from among us formerly, and may alſo be the ſtate of ſome who go out from us now. For as there is one that gathers to the true church; ſo there is another that endeavours to draw and ſcatter from it, and then to cauſe men to turn head againſt it, as if it were not of God, but apoſtatized from the Spirit and principle of truth, which indeed is their own ſtate and condition in God's ſight; but not the church's, which was gathered and is preſerved by him, glory to the Lord, over all the accuſations of the accuſer, through what mouth ſoever he utter them forth.

The

The next Citation.

OH! how ſweet and pleaſant is it to the truly ſpiritual eye, to ſee ſeveral ſorts of believers, ſeveral forms of Chriſtians in the ſchool of Chriſt, every one learning their own leſſon, performing their own peculiar ſervice, and knowing, owning, and loving one another in their ſeveral places, and different performances to their maſter, to whom they are to give an account, and not to quarrel one with another about their different practices! This is the true ground of love and unity, not that ſuch a man walks and does juſt as I do, but becauſe I feel the ſame Spirit of life in him, and that he walks in his rank, in his own order, in his proper way and place of ſubjection to that. And this is far more pleaſing to me, than if he walked juſt in the track wherein I walk; nay (ſo far as I am ſpiritual) I cannot ſo much as deſire that he ſhould do ſo, until he be particularly led thereto, by the ſame Spirit that led me.

Confirm. The ſpiritual eye beholdeth things aright, beholdeth things in the Lord, and taſteth ſweetneſs in, and is pleaſed with, that which is ſpiritual. If every one did eye the Lord, ſubject to the Lord, anſwer the light and Spirit of the Lord in their own hearts, though the forms in the ſchool of Chriſt be higher or lower, the leſſons different, and the practices anſwerable, yet every one minding his own place and leſſon, and performing his own peculiar ſervice, the ſpiritual eye would be delighted therewith. And thoſe that are of the true ſeed and birth do know, own, and love one another in their ſeveral places, and different performances to their maſter, to whom they are to give an account; and do not quarrel with one another about their different performances. Oh! how ſweetly is this practiſed and experienced among us at this day!

And unity in the life is the ground of true brotherly love and fellowſhip. Not that another man walks juſt as I do; but though he be weaker or ſtronger, yet he walks by the ſame principle of light, and is felt in the ſame Spirit of life, which guideth both the weak and the ſtrong, in their ſeveral ranks, order, proper way, and place of ſubjection, to that one Spirit of life and truth, which all are to be ſubject to.

Nay, he that is truly ſpiritual and ſtrong in the light and Spirit of the Lord, cannot deſire that the weak ſhould walk juſt as he does; but only as they are ſtrengthened, taught, and led thereunto, by the ſame Spirit that ſtrengthened, taught, and led him.

Queſt. This is true concerning every one that is in the faith, that is in the true light, that is in the true Spirit; and keeps his rank, order, place, and ſubjection, though in a weak and low degree; but will this hold good concerning any that have erred from the faith, have made ſhipwreck thereof, and have turned from the true light and Spirit in themſelves, and left their

their rank, order, and teſtimony againſt the world, and are again become one with the world, even in thoſe very practices which the ſpirit of the world delights in, and which the Spirit of the Lord hath teſtified, and ſtill teſtifieth againſt, in all that are faithful, and keep to their firſt love and light? Is the church to bear with theſe in their practices, or own ſuch ſpirits, or believe that they now walk according to the light which firſt convinced them? Is not the ſpirit of judgment with the church? Hath not God given her diſcerning? Hath ſhe not power and authority from God to try ſpirits? Yea, and to judge falſe ſpirits, that have loſt their habitation in the light, though they may ſtill pretend to dwell there; can ſhe not try thoſe which ſay they are Jews and are not, but have loſt the light, Spirit, and power which circumciſeth, and keepeth circumciſed, and are run back into the uncircumciſed paths of the world again, which came from, and anſwer the uncircumciſed ſpirit and nature, both in themſelves and others?

The next Citation.

AND he that knows what it is to receive any truths from the Spirit, and to be led into any practices by the Spirit, and how prone the fleſhly part is to make haſte, and how dangerous that haſte is, will not be forward to preſs his knowledge or practices upon others, but rather wait patiently till the Lord fit them for the receiving thereof, and fear leſt they ſhould receive and practiſe too ſoon, even in that part which cannot ſerve the Lord.

Confirm. I will ſend the comforter, the Spirit of truth, ſaith Chriſt to his diſciples, and he ſhall lead you into all truth. Now the diſciple of Chriſt is led into truth, in the croſs to that part wherein others may receive the notions of things; yea, perhaps of truth itſelf. And the diſciple muſt alſo abide in the croſs, after that the Lord hath given him the true knowledge, or he cannot be rightly led into the practice of what he knows. So that the diſciple comes very hardly, both by his knowledge, and by his ability to practiſe, what the Spirit of God teacheth him and requireth of him. There is a fleſhly part indeed, prone to make haſte; but that haſte is dangerous, and that fleſhly part, in all its haſty deſires and motions, is to be denied, and kept down. And he that is diligent in denying and keeping down that fleſhly part in himſelf (with the forwardneſs and haſtineſs thereof) cannot eaſily be forward to preſs his knowledge and practices upon others; but will be patiently waiting on the Lord, for their kindly and ſeaſonable underſtanding of the truth, and growth in it; and fear, leſt they ſhould run before their guide, and be practiſing too ſoon even in that part which cannot ſerve the Lord; for the Lord muſt be ſerved and worſhiped in his Spirit and truth; and thither are all to be directed and brought, and there is every mind to be ſtayed and kept, or it cannot worſhip and ſerve aright.

Quest. But what if a man entertain a wrong spirit, and let go the truths he had received, and turn from the practices which God's Spirit taught him, into the spirit and practices of the world, which God's Spirit hath testified and will for ever testify against? Is not the church to deny this spirit, and these practices, and the person that hath hearkened to this spirit, and is found in these practices? That he may turn from this spirit and practices, to the true Spirit, and to the true testimony and practices which it once taught him, and still teacheth all that hearken to its voice and holy motions, and listen not to the voice and instigations of a stranger.

The next Citation.

THE great error of the state of the apostasy, hath been to set up an outward order and uniformity, and to make mens consciences bend thereto, either by arguments of wisdom, or by force; but the property of the true church-government is, to leave the conscience to its full liberty in the Lord, to preserve it single and entire for the Lord to exercise, and to seek unity in the light, and in the Spirit, walking sweetly and harmoniously together in the midst of differing practices.

Confirm. That there have been ages of apostasy from the true Spirit and power of the apostles, is very manifest, both by the doctrines, discipline and cruel practices of those, that would have themselves accounted the true church, and true believers and Christians. And that they have set up an outward order and conformity, and have used both arguments of wisdom, and also force, to make mens consciences to bend thereto; this is as manifest as the former. Now that this hath been an error, and a great error, is very manifest also; because it is contrary to the nature of conscience, which is to be led by God's Spirit, not bent by man's wisdom and constraint, and contrary to Christ and his apostles doctrine and practice, who would have every man fully persuaded of what he performs to God, from whom he must receive the reward and approbation, or the dislike and punishment, for his answering or disobeying the light which God sets up, or causeth to shine, in his own conscience.

And the property of the true church-government, and the practice and path of the true church in these our days, is to leave the conscience to its full liberty in the Lord; to preserve it single and entire for the Lord, and to seek unity in the light and in the Spirit, walking sweetly and harmoniously together in the midst of differing practices. Nay, it is not the desire of the church at this day, that any should come up into the practice, or holy order of the gospel, according to what the Lord hath taught others, but only as the Lord teacheth and leadeth them.

Quest. Concerning what conscience is this to be understood? Is it to be understood of the tender and weak conscience? Or of the hard and seared conscience?

conſcience? For the conſcience which God once made tender, may afterwards come to be ſeared and hardened. And is the church of Chriſt, which is guided by the Spirit and wiſdom of God, taught and required by him ſo to act towards the hard and ſeared conſcience, as it is towards the tender and weak conſcience? Is the hard and ſeared conſcience, which hath forſaken the true light, Spirit, and power, and turned againſt the truth, and is in a wrong ſtiff, wilful, hardened liberty and ſubtilty, to be left to its liberty, and to that ſpirit which draweth it out and hardeneth it in a wrong liberty? Can there be any unity, in the light and in the Spirit, had with thoſe who are erred from the light and from the Spirit, and are deceived in their own hearts concerning it, and do but only pretend to it? Can they walk ſweetly and harmoniouſly together in differing practices, who differ alſo in the ground, and are not one in the foundation, even in the true light and Spirit of the Lord? Ought not the church to judge this ſpirit, with its liberty and evil conſcience (for that ſpirit will make the conſciences of all that let it in, evil), as well as, to the utmoſt, to cheriſh the liberty of the tender conſciences in and to the Lord? Read and conſider theſe ſcriptures following, *Tit.* i. 15. 1 *Tim.* i. 19. and iv. 2.

The next Citation.

AND this I can truly ſay concerning myſelf, I never found my ſpirit forward to draw any, either to any thing I believed to be true, or to any practice or way of worſhip I obſerved or walked in; but deſired that the power and leadings of life might go before them, and I was afraid leſt men ſhould receive things from my hand, and not from the Lord's. He hath written in the margent of the book he ſent me, *Oh! what a tender ſpirit was here!* intimating as if it were not ſo with me now.

Confirm. Bleſſed be the Lord, it was ſo with me formerly, and is ſo with me daily more and more; for as I wait on the Lord in his truth, which makes tender; ſo upon this occaſion, being forced to it, I cannot but confeſs, that I witneſs the Lord daily more and more uniting my ſpirit to him in his truth; and as truth increaſeth, ſo the tenderneſs which comes from it ſtill increaſeth in me, and I do not (nay, I may ſay cannot, the contrary is ſo written on my heart) ſo much as deſire to drive any to what practice or way of worſhip I believe to be true, and am taught of God to obſerve; but this is the longing of my ſoul, that the power and leadings of life may go before them; and I daily behave myſelf as one that is afraid, leſt men ſhould receive things from my hand, and not from the Lord's.

Queſt. Yet, where I find perſons manifeſtly warp and turn aſide from the truth, and let in a wrong thing, and teſtify againſt the truth and way of the Lord, and their hearts hardened by the ſubtilty of him who hath deceived them; may I not ſingly and faithfully teſtify it to them, and breathe

to the Lord for them, that they may return to the true Spirit, and to the holy teſtimony and practices thereof, and not condemn ſuch, as departers from the light and truth, who abide in it, nor juſtify themſelves as abiding in it, when they are really departed from it?

His laſt Citation of Words of mine is out of another Book, intituled, *An Anſwer to the common Objection,* &c. p. 8. The Words are theſe:

THAT power therefore in the Church which ſpares the hypocrites (who can eaſily comply with an outward conformity in worſhip, without feeling an inward life and virtue) but lights heavy on that which is tender and ſhy in matters of worſhip, that is not the true church-power, but at beſt but a counterfeit of the true.

Confirm. The power which Chriſt hath given his church is not to ſpare hypocrites, who may eaſily comply with an outward uniformity in worſhip, without feeling an inward life and virtue. And ſuch are not ſpared, but ſmote at, by the Spirit and power of God among us very often. And oh! that there were no hypocrites and formal ſpirits among us; but that all that profeſs the truth were in the truth, and ſubject to it, and did live the life of it! Nor doth the true church-power light heavy on that which is tender and ſhy in matters of worſhip; but the miniſtry of the true church is to the conſcience, as in God's ſight, and is very tender of it, as before him, to whom it is to give an account of the ſpiritual power it hath received from him, and of the exerciſe of it. That power therefore which ſpares the hypocrites, and lights heavy on that which is tender and ſhy in matters of worſhip, to be ſure is not the true church-power, but at beſt but a counterfeit of the true.

Queſt. But that power in the church which doth not ſpare hypocrites, but is very gentle and tender to all tender conſciences, is not that the true church power? And who is the hypocrite? Is not he that pretendeth to the light, when he is departed from it, an hypocrite? And he which ſetteth up that which he calls light in himſelf, and denieth that which is indeed true light, and which iſſueth forth from God's Holy Spirit in his church, is not he an hypocrite? And hath not the church power to judge all his falſe pretences, and to try his ſpirit by the true light and Spirit of the Lord Jeſus, which is ſtill preſent with the true church? If the Spirit of Chriſt be indeed preſent with his church, ſurely it cannot but have power and authority to try, judge, and condemn every thing that is of a contrary ſpirit and nature, in all falſe pretenders whatſoever; who by their pretences to the true light, cannot ſhelter that which is indeed contrary to it from the holy and righteous judgment of the Spirit and power of God in his church.

Thus

Thus I have gone over theſe ſeveral citations of John Pennyman's, and punctually ſet them down as he had cited them, and ſpoken more words to the confirmation of them, to manifeſt to others, as I find it plainly with me before the Lord, that I am fully the ſame at this day, in the ſenſe and belief of my heart, as I was then; believing the ſame truth, and as ready to hold it forth, if the Lord at any time ſhall call me unto it, as I was then. But I was not then againſt true church government; nor did intend this to encourage any man to ſhelter himſelf, by a pretence to the light in himſelf, againſt true church-government; aſſuredly knowing that the ſpirit of the prophets is ſubject to the prophets; and that he that is truly ſubject to the light and Spirit of God in his own heart, will be taught thereby to be ſubject to it alſo in others. For the life, Spirit, and power of God doth not riſe in vain in any; and he that hath the true ear open, will hear its voice in whomſoever it ſpeaks; and he that doth not hear its voice, when it ſpeaks through any to him, doth not hear with the circumciſed ear, nor underſtand with the circumciſed heart. So that John Pennyman, in citing theſe my words, as if in ſo writing I was againſt the true church-government, or ſetting up the government of any particular man (upon any pretence whatſoever) above the ſenſe, underſtanding, and judgment of the true church, does me great wrong, even before the Lord, who knoweth that it was otherwiſe with me in that day; and he greatly wrongeth my words, which did not ſignify any ſuch thing: for in the very ſame book, and in ſome of the pages which he quotes, there is expreſſed a ſenſe of, and a teſtimony to, the true church-government, which I am aſſured the Spirit of the Lord will give forth, and lead his into, as the neceſſities and occaſions of the church require. For as the Lord is not wanting to the particular, ſo will he not be wanting to the general: but he is faithful, who hath promiſed to be with his church and people, who wait upon him, and look up to him for the light and judgment of his Spirit in things wherein he engageth them, and which require their ſingle diſcerning and judgment in.

To manifeſt, therefore, from this very book, what my belief was, and how hearty I was to church-government, and ſenſible of the neceſſity and uſefulneſs of it, I ſhall recite ſome paſſages out of it.

Firſt, I ſhall mention the title of that part of my book, which had John Pennyman expreſſed fully, as it is in the title-page, is thus: *Whereunto ſomewhat is added about the authority and government which Chriſt excluded out of his church; which occaſioneth ſomewhat concerning the true church-government.*

This might have poiſed people's ſpirits in the reading of his *Citations*, from judging me to direct men to the ſetting up of any thing in their minds and conſciences which they may call light, in oppoſition to the light and Spirit of God in his church, or to ſet up a private judgment in themſelves, above the light and judgment of God's Spirit in the church. For as the church is to be tender of every member, ſo every member is to be tender and

and regardful towards the church, and of the power and authority which God hath given it.

The next Paſſage that is on me to mention, is p. 76.

There is nothing to hurt in the mountain of God's holineſs; but there is a righteous ſcepter, a ſweet ſcepter, a ſpiritual ſcepter, which reacheth the ſpirit in the power of life, but toucheth not the outward man. To which I may add, The power of the church is not to hurt the outward man; nay, nor the ſoul neither: but is for the deſtruction of the fleſh, that the ſoul may be ſaved. And when the church hath teſtified againſt their practices, or denied their ſpirit, it leaves them to the Lord; yet ſtill praying to him that repentance may be given them, and mercy ſhewn them by him, whoſe mercy endures for ever.

Another Paſſage in p. 77.

Let the life in every one riſe over it (ſpeaking of the proud aſpiring ſpirit) *and trample upon it: and afterwards, that in thee may ariſe which is fit to teach, yea, and to rule in the Lord,* &c.

P. 78. The example of Chriſt is urged, who did not exerciſe a wrong authority over his diſciples, though he was their Lord and Maſter, which ſignified both greatneſs above them, and authority over them, ſee *line* 15. *Yet Chriſt took not upon him this kind of greatneſs, nor did exerciſe this kind of authority; but he was a ſervant,* &c. and did miniſter.

So that there was one kind of greatneſs and authority which Chriſt did not exerciſe, and which his church alſo is not to meddle with: but there was another kind of authority which he had, and which he, who hath all power in heaven and earth, giveth to his church, to partake with him in, and to act in his name.

But why ſhould I mention any ſuch ſmall touches at the thing, when it is directly ſpoken to in a *Queſtion* propounded, and the *Anſwer* thereto, p. 79, 80. *&c.*? I ſhall therefore ſet down the *Queſtion*, and part of the *Anſwer* thereto; the whole being too long to be here inſerted.

Queſt. *But is there to be no greatneſs, no authority, among the diſciples of Jeſus, or in the Church of Chriſt? Is every one to do what he will, to be ſubject to his own fancies and imaginations, to the inventions of his own corrupt heart? What a confuſed building will this be? Surely this will not long remain a Sion, but ſoon become a Babylon, even a heap of diſorder and confuſion.*

Anſw. There is to be no ſuch kind of greatneſs, no ſuch kind of authority; yet there is both a greatneſs and authority ſuitable to the ſtate of diſciples; ſuitable

suitable to that kind of kingdom whereof they are. There are laws, there are governments, there are governors, there is a ruling, and there is a subjection; but all in the Spirit, all suitable to that which is to be governed; but no government of, or according to, the flesh. As Christ's kingdom is not of this world, so the government of his church and people is not according to the world: but as that which gathers is his Spirit, and that which is gathered is spiritual, so that which is governed is the spirits of his people, and they are to be governed by his Spirit, and spiritually, and not after a fleshly manner. Thus Christ himself, though he ministered to his disciples, yet he also was their Lord and Master, and in the Spirit and life of the Father ruled over them; and thus the apostles, and other ministers of Christ, had likewise in the Spirit the care of the churches, and authority in the Lord by his Spirit to govern the spirits of his people: not to govern after a fleshly manner, by their own wills, nor to prescribe to them in a lordly way, either what they should believe or practise; but in the light and in the power of the Spirit, to make their way into every one's conscience in the sight of God, ministring to every one in the Spirit according to their capacity and growth, and waiting patiently for God to convey the food and nourishment, and to build their spirits up in the faith thereby.

The spirit of the prophets is subject to the prophets. Here is the government; here is the law of rule and subjection in the life. Every one feeling a measure of the Spirit in himself, is thereby taught to own and subject to a greater measure of the same Spirit in another. He that hath no measure of the Spirit of God, he is not of God, he is none of Christ's: and he that hath received a measure of the Spirit, in the same Spirit feels another's measure, and owneth it in its place and service, and knoweth its moving, and cannot quench it, but giveth way to it with joy and delight. When the Spirit moves in any one to speak, the same Spirit moves in the other to be subject and give way: and so every one keeping to his own measure in the Spirit, here can be no disorder, but true subjection of every spirit: and where this is wanting, it cannot be supplied by any outward rule or order set up in the church by common consent; for that is fleshly, and lets in the flesh, and destroys the true order, rule, and subjection.

And then to limit the government aright, these two precious cautions or directions are added, pag. 85. which I am sure will answer the truth and witness of God in every conscience.

First, *Care must be had that nothing govern in the church of Christ but the Spirit of Christ.*

Secondly, *That the Conscience be kept tender, that nothing be received but according to the light in the conscience.*

There

There is likewise an *Objection* answered about *Uniformity*, p. 87, 88. which not being very large, and tending further to open the sense of my heart in this thing, I shall also here annex.

Object. *But is not uniformity lovely; and doth not the apostle exhort Christians to be of one mind; and were it not a sweet thing if we were all of one heart, and one way?*

Answ. Yea, uniformity is very lovely, and to be desired and waited for, as the Spirit of the Lord, which is one, leads and draws into one. But for the fleshly part (the wise reasoning part of man) by fleshly ways and means to strive to bring about a fleshly uniformity, which insnares and overbears the tender conscience, this is not lovely, nor spiritual, nor Christian. And the apostle who exhorts Christians to one mind, yet doth not bid them force one another into one mind, but walk together sweetly so far as they had attained; and wherein they were otherwise minded, God in his due time would reveal more to them, *Phil.* iii. 15, 16. He that hath, to him shall be given. And the intent and work of the ministry (with the several ministrations of it) is to bring into the unity (Ephes. iv. 13.) as persons are able to follow, and not to force all men into one practice or way; that is the way to destroy the faith, and the true unity, and at best can introduce but a fleshly appearance of unity in such a form of worship and godliness as eats out the power. And for being of one heart, and one way, blessed be the Lord, this is in measure known and witnessed. The way is one; Christ the truth of God; and he that is in the faith, and in the obedience to that light which shines from his Spirit into the heart of every believer, hath a taste of the one heart, and of the one way; and knoweth that no variety of practices (which is of God) can make a breach in the true unity. This is the one way, for every one to be subject to that light of Christ's Spirit which he hath received from Christ; and every one keeping here, there is also one heart kept in the midst of all the variety and diversity of practices. And the unity being thus kept, all will come into one outwardly also at length, as the light grows in every one, and as every one grows into the light: but this must be patiently waited for from the hand of God (who hath the right way of effecting it, and who alone can do it) and not harshly and cruelly attempted by the rough hand of man.

Now I desire all that would not injure and wrong another (in taking part of one's sense and mind, and concealing the other) to observe how serious my heart is in the sight of the Lord concerning church-government, and unity and uniformity among the people of the Lord, in the Spirit and power of the Lord, as the Lord shall please rightly and orderly to bring it forth, and not otherwise. And my words so plainly signifying, and holding

forth

forth this, Oh! how will J. Pennyman anſwer it to the great God, for thus miſrepreſenting me, and ſtriving to make my words ſignify that which they never did, and as a proof how contrary our doctrine was then, to what it hath been of late years; whereas, in that very book he cites, my words are full concerning church-government, the authority of the church, and the duty of ſubjection to it in the life, as was before recited.

I have been in a great travail of ſpirit for J. Pennyman, the Lord having ſhewed me his ſpirit and ſtate (as he hath alſo done to many others, who abide in this pure holy light which he hath forſaken, and is departed from); and this hath been the cry of my heart to the God and Father of my life for him, in great brokenneſs and tears, many times; *Father, forgive him, for he knows not what he does. He knows not what Spirit and power he acts againſt, nor what Spirit and power it is that leads him. Oh! that he might ſee it, and turn from it, and live! And oh! that all that err, and are miſtaken in judgment, might have a ſenſe of that which is truth indeed, and of that which is darkneſs indeed in their own hearts; and might not put darkneſs for light, and light for darkneſs, as too many now do, to the great hurt of their own ſouls, and the hardening of others againſt God's precious way and truth, which will be bitterneſs in the latter end unto all ſuch!*

THREE OR FOUR

CONSIDERATIONS

ADDED, CONCERNING

CHURCH-GOVERNMENT.

Firſt, THAT it is the holy will and pleaſure of the great God that his church ſhould be governed by his Holy Spirit and power revealed in it. God is the God of order, and not of confuſion, and he would have every thing in the right and holy order every where, eſpecially in his church. He hath given a meaſure of his good Spirit to every man, and he would have every man governed thereby: and he hath given more of his good Spirit and holy power to his church than to any particular, and he would have his church governed thereby. Read the epiſtles of Chriſt to the churches in the ſecond and third chapters of the *Revelations*, and ſee how government and care over their members is expected from them. A church is a gathering in the name, power, and authority of the Moſt High; and Chriſt, to whom God gave all power in heaven and earth, is in them, and with them. God knows they can do nothing without his power; and he is faithful who hath appointed them to meet together in his name, and he will not fail them. How hath this been experienced in former days! And how has this been experienced in this our day, bleſſed be the name of our God! The life that ſprings in the church, the light that ſhines in the church, the power and preſence of the Lord that is revealed in his church, oh! how glorious is it! God hath not gathered nor preſerved a people through ſo many trials, nor ſo exerciſed and built them up in his pure fear, Holy Spirit, and living truth, to leave them ſo ſuddenly, and caſt them off, as ſome men vainly imagine; but as the Lord hath thrown down that which ſhall never be built up more, ſo the Lord hath built up that which ſhall never

ver be thrown down more, and brought many of his people to a ſettled ſtate, in the unchangeable truth and power.

Secondly, It is the great work of Satan, and the great intereſt of Satan, to oppoſe the holy order and government of the Spirit of Chriſt in his church. It is that power which threw down his kingdom, and that power will keep his kingdom down; yea, the more that authority and power is eſtabliſhed in the church, the more he is ſeen through, and his ſtrength and ſubtilty avail nothing before the wiſdom and power of God revealed in his church. And this we have obſerved, and may obſerve, in this our day, the judgment of the church, the life in the church, the light that hath ſtayed with the church and holy gathering, while particulars ſometimes have been miſtaken, and erred about the light in themſelves, hath been a ſtay to thoſe that have hearkened to her voice, and a means to help to recover thoſe, who through the ſtrength of the temptation, and their too confident leaning to that which they took for the light within, and not conſulting with thoſe whom God had ordained to be an help to the weak, and had a clearer eye-ſight and underſtanding in the truth than themſelves; I ſay, the light that hath ſtayed with the church, hath been a help to recover ſuch who have miſtaken in judgment, and erred from the light in their own particulars.

Thirdly, There is great benefit and ſafety to every particular in the holy order and government which God hath ordained in his church. God knoweth it is not fit for believers or his gathered-ones to be alone, and therefore he hath appointed, that by the ſame power and Spirit which gathered them, they ſhould be added to the church which he hath already gathered. And then they are in the place where God takes care of them; where the Lord God appears; where the Lord God dwells. For as he dwelt outwardly in the national church of the Jews, ſo he dwells inwardly in the ſpiritual church, and gathering of believers. There life is in its unity and ſtrength; there light ſhines as in its proper place; there the Shepherd is who keeps the ſheep from erring; there the leading power, the preſerving power, the ordering power, is daily waited for, and experienced in its brightneſs and clearneſs. *Woe is to him that is alone*; but bleſſings are upon him who is in unity with God's holy gathered people, and is in the ſenſe of, and under the guidance of, that Spirit which is continually preſent with them. And as we have witneſſed bleſſings in our firſt gathering, as we were gathered and joined to the light, Spirit, and power of the holy God in our own particulars, ſo we have witneſſed bleſſings in our unity with the life in the body. Oh! how every motion of life is felt there! How the wiſdom and power of God is revealed there! What help is adminiſtered to every member there! How is the knitting in the life, and the flowing of the life and holy power from veſſel to veſſel, daily experienced there! So that every one is quickened with the pure life; every one ſeaſoned with the pure ſalt; every virgin anointed with the holy ointment; every one leavened

with the leaven which unleavens to ſin and Satan, and leavens to God. Indeed my ſoul daily bleſſeth the Lord, not only that he hath viſited me, but brought me into the holy living ſociety; and that daily the Lord vouchſafeth to give me to partake of their life and Spirit, in which life and Spirit I have unity with them, and love them, and honour them, and not out of it. Oh! praiſes, and everlaſting honour, and renown to the Lord my God, who hath remembered me with the favour he bears to his people, and hath ſo viſited me with his ſalvation, that he hath given me to ſee the good of his choſen, and cauſed my poor, deſolate, mourning ſoul to rejoice in the gladneſs of his nation, and to glory in him with his inheritance. Glorious things were ſpoken of the church under the law; a glorious power and preſence was with that outward people, under that outward covenant; but this was but a ſhadow of the glory that was to be revealed in the church of the new covenant, and of the preſence and power of the living God, that was to be manifeſted and dwell there: And indeed it is manifeſted, indeed it doth dwell there, and thoſe that are the begotten, and born, and preſerved by God's Holy Spirit, and power of the immortal Word of life, daily witneſs it.

Fourthly, The glory and beauty of the New-Teſtament-church doth in no ſmall degree conſiſt in the holy order and government of them, as a ſpiritual living body, by the bleſſed Spirit and power of the Lord.

There were four things wherein the glory of the church of the Jews under the covenant did much conſiſt.

The *firſt* was, in the ſalvation wherewith God viſited them, and which he beſtowed upon them. *Happy art thou, O Iſrael! Who is like to thee, O people ſaved by the Lord, the ſhield of thy help, and who is the ſword of thine excellency. And thine enemies ſhall be found lyars unto thee, and thou ſhalt tread upon their high-places*, Deut. xxxiii. 29.

Secondly, In the gifts God beſtowed upon them; for God did adorn and beautify that people with the good things which he beſtowed upon them, *Ezek.* xvi. 14.

Thirdly, In the preſence of the Lord their God in the midſt of them, the ark of whoſe preſence was with them, and whoſe dwelling-place was among them, and who was nigh unto them to be enquired of by them, and to anſwer and ſupply them with all that they wanted and called upon him for, *Deut.* iv. 7.

Fourthly, In the holy ſtatutes and righteous judgments which God gave them to be ordered and governed by, as his choſen people, *ver.* 5, 6, and 8.

Now all theſe are much more fulfilled in the New-Teſtament-church; for,

Firſt,

First, There is the ſalvation witneſſed, which this outward ſalvation of this outward people was but a figure of. There the everlaſting arm of God's power is revealed in an inward and ſpiritual way and manner, to deſtroy the enemies of a man's own houſe, to redeem from Satan, to cut Rahab, to wound the dragon inwardly, and to defend his gathered people from the inroads of his ſtrength, and from the ſubtilty of his temptations.

Secondly, The Lord doth give great gifts to his churches; he bleſſeth them with all ſpiritual bleſſings in heavenly things in Chriſt. Mark the diverſity of gifts, and diverſity of manifeſtations, which God gave to his churches in the apoſtles days, 1 *Cor.* xii. 4, *&c.*

Thirdly, There was God's preſence revealed; there Chriſt was in the midſt, whenever they were gathered together in his name. Every church (as well as that of the Epheſians) was built up together an habitation of God through the Spirit, *Epheſ.* ii. 22. Yea, Chriſt was head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullneſs of him that filleth all in all, *Chap.* i. 22, 23. Yea, they were, and are, the temple of the living God, in which God would dwell and walk, and be their God, and they his people, 2 *Cor.* vi. 16.

Fourthly, The holy order of his own Spirit and life God will not fail to reveal unto them, that they may walk in the Spirit of the goſpel, in the power of the goſpel, in the order of the goſpel, and the holy government of God's Spirit and power may ſhine in the midſt of them, and that God may bleſs them as an habitation of juſtice, and mountain of holineſs, *Jer.* xxi. 23.

The church is a body; every particular ſoul that is renewed, quickened, and kept alive, is a member. Now every member needs the preſence and power of that Spirit which quickened it, to nouriſh, keep alive, and order it. And the church hath much more need of the Spirit to be preſent with it, to guide and order it, and keep it in the holy order, power, and government of life. And this order and holy government in the Spirit and power of the Lord was brought forth in the apoſtles days: for the apoſtles did rejoice in it concerning that church of Coloſſe, who joyed beholding their order, and the ſtedfaſtneſs of their faith in Chriſt, *Coloſſ.* ii. 5. For the apoſtles and miniſters of Chriſt did ſet things in order in that day, *Tit.* i. 5. 1 *Cor.* xi. 34. and it was their joy to ſee that order obſerved, and their grief when they were unruly, and would not be ſubject to the holy order and government of the church, 1 *Theſſ.* v. 14. *Tit.* i. 10. And the church of Corinth, though it fell ſhort in no gift, yet falling ſhort in order, it did not arrive at the glory of ſome other churches.

The ſpiritual Solomon, who is full of the wiſdom of God, oh! the bleſſed order and holy government that he brings forth among his church and people! How doth God eſtabliſh Jeruſalem, and make her a praiſe in the earth, but by the holy order and bleſſed government of his Spirit, governing her as a church, as a ſpiritual body, by his own pure wiſdom, which no other government or order can come near? And truly my heart hath been

been often affected and filled with a raviſhing joy, when I have beheld the heavenly and bleſſed order and government which the Lord God of wiſdom hath already brought forth among us, and guideth us in, to the comfort and refreſhment of many, and to the injury and hurt of none, neither without nor within. And indeed we do not deſire any greatneſs or authority of man; but only of the Lord our God in the midſt of us, that all men may be but his ſervants and miniſters in the church, and to the church, for the good of the church. No, no; this is the day of the Lord, of the ſetting up and exalting of his power in the church, which the church waiteth for, and knoweth the appearance of, and cannot bear the exaltation of man (of man's ſpirit, wiſdom, power, and authority) inſtead of the Lord's. Yet nothing that cometh from the Lord, from his pure life and Spirit in any, muſt be rejected: and if the Lord pleaſe to make uſe of thoſe whom he did make uſe of to gather home to himſelf; I ſay, if he hath given them gifts, and pleaſe to make uſe of them alſo in building up, and manifeſting the holy order of his Holy Spirit and power, the Lord muſt not be reſiſted or withſtood therein; but whatever comes from him muſt be received with thankfulneſs, through what inſtrument ſoever he pleaſe to convey it.

Object. *But have I not been taught to be ſubject to the light in my own heart, and to make that my judge? And is not this another, or new, or different doctrine from that, now to tell me I muſt ſubject to the light of God's Spirit in his church? Suppoſe that which the church requires, or orders, or holds forth, be different from my light, or be not yet revealed to me by the light wherewith God hath enlightened me, muſt I deny the light wherewith God hath enlightened me, and ſubject to the church's light? Or muſt I practiſe as the church orders, before I have light and faith in my own particular?*

Anſw. I ſhall anſwer this queſtion according to the naked and plain ſenſe of truth in my heart.

Firſt, God gives power to his church to perform all that he requires of her as a church. Now the church is a ſpiritual body, and is to take care of her members, to look after them that they mind the truth, and walk according to truth, and to admoniſh and reprove them when they do otherwiſe. And every member of the church ought to hear the church, in whatever ſhe ſpeaks unto it from God.

Secondly, Every member hath need of the light, Spirit, and power which God gives his church, and reveals in his church, for the good of the body, and the benefit and advantage of each member therein.

Thirdly, The light, Spirit and power in the church is never contrary to the light, Spirit, and power in any member; but always one with it, and a cheriſher and preſerver of what God begets, and which anſwers his witneſs in any. The new Jeruſalem, the church of God's building in his own Spirit and power, is a city at unity with itſelf. The greateſt degree of light owns, and is at unity with, the leaſt; and the leaſt degree of light hath a ſenſe of that which is in degree and meaſure above it.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, The light in the weakeſt, which they are at firſt to be turned, and afterwards to be kept to, though there is a ſufficiency in it for the particular, yet they are not ſo underſtanding and ſenſible of it as thoſe whoſe ſenſes have been long exerciſed in the living truth, and are grown in the holy experience. Therefore as the elders are to be tender of the younger, ſo the younger are to reverence the elders in the Lord, and not to ſlight their teſtimony, experience, or judgment in the truth. When we were firſt convinced of the truth, were we not in a great degree ignorant and doubtful concerning the riſings and motions of it in the heart, which the eye being yet weak, could not clearly diſtinguiſh? And oh! how helpful to us was the tender care and advice of ſuch whom God had made acquainted with thoſe things, and were able to give us true judgment from him, in ſuch caſes as our weak minds were apt to be entangled about, and could not ſee through?

Fifthly, Great ſobriety is needful in ſuch caſes, wherein men are too prone to be judging others, eſpecially the church of God. Every man is to take heed of thinking of himſelf more highly than he ought to think; but to think ſoberly, according as God had dealt to every man the meaſure of faith, *Rom.* xii. 3. And the young men (who have not the experience of the aged, and are moſt apt to confidence and excurſions) are in a ſpecial manner to be exhorted to be ſober-minded, *Tit.* ii. 6. Men may eaſily judge that others err, and that they themſelves keep to the light and meaſure of truth in their own particulars; but it is hard to do it. But they that indeed do it, abide in the humility, and innocency, and lamb-like ſpirit, which would give no offence in any thing, neither to Jew nor Gentile, nor to the church of God. If it will go ſo hard with him that offends one of Chriſt's little-ones, how will it go with him that offends his church, wherein his glory and power riſeth, and is eſtabliſhed? The church is not apt to be ſuch an erring body from the light, Spirit, and power of the Lord Jeſus, as many (who miſtake concerning the light in their own particulars) are too apt to ſuppoſe.

Laſtly, Ever ſince the fall of man, man hath been ſecretly, or more manifeſtly, directed by a light, or the principle within, to direct or guide his ways. To Adam the holy ſeed was promiſed, which was not only to appear outwardly in a body of fleſh, but alſo within in man's heart, to bruiſe the ſerpent's head there. And the holy patriarchs had not the letter outwardly, but God's Spirit inwardly to be their guide and teacher, which did alſo ſtrive with the wicked old world before the flood. The Jews alſo were directed to the Word nigh in the mouth and heart; and this Word ſhewed alſo to the Gentiles what was good, and what the Lord required of them; and by this Word ſuch of the Gentiles as hearkened to it felt ſomewhat of the new creation, and of the new nature, by which nature they did in meaſure anſwer the holy law of God, and do the things contained in the law, which by the old corrupt nature no man can do. Alſo Chriſt preached the kingdom,

dom, or ſeed of the kingdom within.' And the apoſtles preached the ſame word of faith within, which Moſes had teſtified of.

Yet in none of theſe diſpenſations was any teſtimony from God to be deſpiſed; but his voice to be heard in the prophets, in Chriſt, and in the apoſtles. And though men are bleſſedly and glorioufly turned, and to be turned to the light within, in theſe our days; yet they are not thereby taught to neglect or deſpiſe the voice of God, in any whom he ſends and ſpeaks by, and pretend it is contrary to their light; but to lie low before the Lord, that in the true humility and holy fear, they may know the voice of the Shepherd, both in their own hearts, and in whomſoever he pleaſeth to ſpeak. For the Great Almighty God is not limited, but he may ſpeak in and thro' whom he pleaſeth. He may ſpeak to me from the anointing in my own heart, and the holy anointing may pleaſe to ſpeak to me through others; and ſo far as I am of God, and ſenſible of his appearance, I cannot deſpiſe the voice of the anointing in my own heart, or through others. Yea, truth teacheth that modeſty, temperance, humility, tenderneſs, and ſobriety, that I dare not deſpiſe the voice that pretends to the anointing in any, until I have made trial of it. Yea, John Pennyman's voice and teſtimony I durſt not condemn, until the Lord my God, in the unerring light and pure ſpringing life, manifeſted unto me that it was not of him, but of the transforming enemy, who had bewitched and deceived him by his ſtrong deluſions (he forſaking the rock, which would have been his ſtrength), to receive and believe a lie, inſtead of the truth.

Oh! bleſſed be the Lord for the building up ſuch a church, and ſpeaking to us through his church! And happy are they that hear her voice, and ſo keep to their own, as to know the voice of their own in the church, and are not through temptation prejudiced againſt it. For it is the Lord's gathering, and the Lord is with it; and the people who have been gathered by the Lord, and are daily taught by him, keep with him. And tho' ſome may depart from us, and through error of judgment teſtify againſt us, yet truth abides, and the Lord's people abide with the truth, and his building goeth on, and the holy government of his Son encreaſeth in it, and the Lord appears more and more inwardly in his glory, as the hearts of his people are made capable to receive it from him. And in all the goings out of any, and apoſtaſies that have been in any, through hearkening to a wrong ſpirit, they that have heard and reverenced the voice and teſtimony of the church, and God's choſen and bleſſed miniſtry, which he hath raiſed among us, have ſtill been preſerved; and they that have gone therefrom, been betrayed. And it is my faith, this church of God's gathering ſhall ſtill be preſerved, and grow in the holy dominion and authority of God's bleſſed Spirit; and that all her enemies ſhall be found liars unto her, and ſhe ſhall tread upon their high places, and ſhall grow and proſper the more by all oppoſition; the everlaſting arm and wiſdom of the Almighty being with her, to preſerve, proſper, and bleſs her, ſo be it. *Amen.*

THE

THE SEED of GOD, AND OF HIS KINGDOM,

Treated and Teſtified of

According to the SCRIPTURES of TRUTH,

AND ACCORDING TO

True Experience felt in the HEART from the GOD of TRUTH.

By ISAAC PENINGTON.

The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of muſtard-ſeed, which a man took and ſowed in his field. Which indeed is the leaſt of all ſeeds: but when it is grown, it is the greateſt among herbs, &c. MATT. xiii. 31, 32.

Being born again, not of corruptible ſeed, but incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth for ever. 1 PET. i. 23.

Whoſoever is born of God, doth not commit ſin; for his ſeed remaineth in him: and he cannot ſin, becauſe he is born of God. 1 JOHN iii. 9.

THE PREFACE.

I WOULD fain have (and my ſoul exceedingly breathes to the Lord for it) diſputing about religion come to an end, and the right underſtanding, practiſing, and experiencing the true religion begun and go on in mens hearts. The goſpel-religion, in the apoſtles days, did begin in the evidence and demonſtration of God's Spirit inwardly; and it cannot rightly begin any otherwiſe now. Nor can it rightly go on any other way, but according to its beginning: for they that begin in the Spirit, cannot poſſibly rightly go on, or be made perfect, by the fleſh. Did the apoſtles in vain wait for the Spirit and power from on high? Can the Goſpel-miniſtry, or goſpel-work in any heart, be carried on without it? Or did they in vain turn men from Satan's power to God? Can the leaſt true change be wrought in the heart, without the operation of God's Holy Spirit and power there? And to be turned to wait for, and taught to know, the riſings of the pure power of the Lord inwardly (which is ſo neceſſary to begin, preſerve, and carry on the work), oh! what a precious miniſtration of life, and of the goſpel, is this from the Lord? The thing that we wanted, and mourned after all our days, in our ſeveral ſtrains and ways of profeſſion, without the knowledge of this, is now met with; bleſſed be the Lord God of Iſrael, who hath caſt up and prepared the way (according to his promiſe) before the face of all people. Whoever hath an ear to hear what the Spirit ſaith to the churches of his own gathering, or from the angel of his own ſending, may now hear the bleſſed tidings of the reign of the King of Iſrael, and of Sion his holy hill, and Jeruſalem his holy city; and how to wait for the law going out of Sion, and the word of the Lord from Jeruſalem, and how he may receive the ſheep's nature, and the ſheep's ear, which hears the voice of the Shepherd, and is not deceived about it. Oh! come out of the vain diſputing mind, and thou comeſt out of deceit! Come into the true ſilence and ſtilling of the fleſhly part thither, where God's voice is heard and underſtood; and thou comeſt into true certainty. There thou comeſt to hear the

the voice behind thee, calling thee from every false way (which is polluted, and where thy soul's rest is not) and directing thee to the true way, to the way of holiness, livingly pointing out and saying to thee, "This is "the way, walk in it." This is the way of life, this is the way of truth, this is the way of peace, this is the way of holiness; here all the true travellers are to walk, with their faces Sion-wards, to obtain the kingdom and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, Oh! every one that truly thirsts, why do ye not come to the waters? God hath opened the way, he heartily invites you; yea, the Spirit and the bride say come, and take the waters of life freely. Oh! wait to know the inward holy power, and the inward birth, and the inward teaching, and the inward covenant, and this birth's overcoming, by the inward power, the inward enemies; that ye being delivered from them, may come to enjoy the well of life, and to sit down in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, where the true rest is; and in the strength, life, and virtue of his Spirit, may serve the Lord in righteousness and holiness, without fear of those enemies which the Lord hath delivered you from, and which his love, mercy, and power, is as a wing over you to preserve you for ever from; I say, that ye may serve the Lord your God out of the fear of these, and feed on his holy mountain, out of the reach of those, in the majesty of the name of the Lord your God, and these may not be able to make you afraid, or disturb your rest, or hinder your sweet enjoyment and precious service of your God any more! Oh! ye that are afraid of being deceived, take heed ye be not deceived inwardly in your hearts, about these things; and by the veil which the enemy spreads there, hindered and deprived of your share in the blessed administration of the Spirit, life, and power of our Lord Jesus; whom to know after the flesh (or as man can comprehend concerning him in his carnal mind) is of little value; but to know him inwardly and spiritually, to live and reign, and to exercise his dominion in the heart over every temptation, and over all that is contrary to God (whenever any such thing appears) is a pure, living, excellent, and satisfactory knowledge of him; which the Lord lead every truly-hungering and thirsting soul towards the obtaining and full enjoyment of! *Amen.*

CONCERNING THE SEED of GOD, OR THE SEED of the KINGDOM:

What it is: Where it is to be found: Who ſowed it there: What is hid or wrapped up in it: What is its Nature: What its Effects: Of its Growth, and Hindrances thereof: Of its Bleſſedneſs, and how it makes Bleſſed? How CHRIST is formed of this Seed; and how the Soul is Born of this Immortal Seed.

Firſt, *WHAT the ſeed is?*

Anſw. The ſeed of God is the word of God; the ſeed of the kingdom is the word of the kingdom. It is a meaſure of the light and life, of the grace and truth, which is by Jeſus Chriſt, whereof in him is the fulneſs. It is an heavenly talent, or manifeſtation of his Spirit in the heart, which is given to man for him, in the virtue and ſtrength of Chriſt, to improve for God. This which God hath placed in man, to witneſs for himſelf, and to guide man from evil unto good (in the pure breathings, quickenings, and ſhinings of it) this is the ſeed, which is freely beſtowed on man, to ſpring up and remain in him, and to gather him out of himſelf, into itſelf.

Secondly, *Who is the ſower of this ſeed?*

Anſw. God, in and through Chriſt. He is the good huſbandman. He, by the word which created all in the beginning, creates a-new in Chriſt Jeſus, renews his workmanſhip in man, and puts a meaſure of this word or Spirit of life in man's heart, whereby he renews him; and they that are thus renewed by him, are his workmanſhip, created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works.

Thirdly, *Where is this ſeed to be found?*

Anſw.

Anſw. Where God ſows it, which is in the inward earth. It is an inward ſeed, and it is ſowed in inward land or earth; that is, in the hearts of men. There the light of the word ſhines, there the life of the word is felt, ſtirring ſecretly in and quickening thoſe that were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins. There the voice and call of the word is heard, calling from unrighteouſneſs and ſin, to righteouſneſs and holineſs.

Fourthly, *In what ſorts of earth is this heavenly ſeed ſown?*

Anſw. In all ſorts; in thorny ground, ſtony ground, highway ground, and good ground. God's inward lightenings enlighten the inward world throughout; ſo that God hath not left any man without a witneſs in his conſcience againſt ſin. So that, though man's conſcience be corrupt, and his light become darkneſs, yet God's witneſs in his conſcience can never be corrupted; but whenever it witneſſeth there, it witneſſeth the truth for God, and againſt man, and the corruption and ſearedneſs of his heart and conſcience.

Fifthly, *In what ſort of earth it brings forth good fruit to perfection.*

Anſw. Only in the good ground. It brings forth fruit in other grounds, and the fruit it brings forth is good. The convictions are good, the deſires begotten there by it, and that ariſe from it, are good. The leaving off of ſome bad things, and doing ſome good things, is good; but the thorns, the cares, the worldlineſs, the fear of perſecution, that ſpring up from another root, and are of another nature, choak the good which the ſeed brings forth in the thorny ground, and ſtifle and choak the ſeed itſelf alſo, in ſuch kind of grounds. But in the good ground which yields its whole nouriſhment to the good ſeed, and will not yield nouriſhment to any bad; the good ſeed not only ſprings up, but brings forth fruit to perfection.

Sixthly, *How may the ground that is bad be made good? Was not the ground which is now good, once bad; and may not the ground which is now bad, be made good?*

Anſw. God hath ſhut up all men in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all. The heart that is now ſoft, was once hard. The heart that is now believing, was once in the unbelief. The heart that now loves God, was once in the enmity. The plough of God, put into the thorny ground, tearing it up, and rooting out the thorns thereof, will change its nature, and make it become better.

Break up your fallow ground; ſow not among thorns; ſaid God to his Iſrael of old. And the ſtony ground, if the ſtones be picked out of it, will be leſs ſtony; yea, not at all ſtony, if all the ſtones be picked out. And the highway ground, being incloſed, and dreſſed by God's Spirit and power, will be no longer common or highway ground. Doth not man, by care, art, and induſtry, change the nature of outward land or ground? Surely then the Lord, by the word of his power, by his inward deſtroying of evil, and creating good anew, can change the nature of ground inwardly.

Now

Now for the clearer and plainer ſignifying of what yet remains on my heart, concerning this precious ſeed of life, or ſeed of the kingdom of God; I ſhall diſtribute it under theſe three heads; under which the things mentioned in the foregoing title will be comprized.

I. What is hid or wrapped up in this ſeed.
II. The nature of it.
III. The effects of it.

I.

What is hid or wrapped up in this precious heavenly Seed.

Anſw. INDEED there is ſo much wrapped up in it, as the heart of man cannot conceive, much leſs the tongue utter; yet ſomewhat have I felt, and ſomewhat is upon my heart, to ſay in anſwer to this thing, under theſe four heads following.

Firſt, The glory of the kingdom of heaven, the glory of the everlaſting kingdom, is hid and wrapped up in it as in a ſeed. Whatever Chriſt appears, reigns, and ſhines in, is there as in a ſeed. Oh! the ſhootings forth, and ſpreadings abroad of it, are indeed glorious and excellent! How can a man almoſt ſpeak concerning it! the thing itſelf (being inwardly felt, known, and enjoyed) is ſo far beyond all words! What doth the kingdom of God ſtand in? It ſtands not in word, but in power. The power is hid and wrapped up in this ſeed. The pure power of life is in this ſeed. The ſword that pierceth Leviathan, that woundeth the Serpent's head, that cutteth Rahab and the dragon, is in this ſeed. Doth the kingdom of God conſiſt in righteouſneſs, peace, and joy in God's Spirit? This is all in this ſeed, and is partaken of and enjoyed, as this ſeed ſprings up, and gains authority and dominion in the heart. Yea, the horn of God's anointed, the righteous and peaceable ſcepter of the Saviour, is known and exalted in this ſeed, as it ſprings up, and ſpreads abroad in the life and virtue of the Father.

Secondly, The divine nature of God Almighty is hid and wrapped up in it. It is the ſeed of God, and it is of the very nature of God; and he in whom it ſprings, and who is gathered into it, born of it, and one with it, partakes of the divine nature. Peter ſpeaks of the great and precious promiſes, whereby the ſaints are made partakers of the divine nature. All the promiſes are to the ſeed of promiſe, to Chriſt the Son of God, to the ſeed of God, to the heirs of life and ſalvation in Chriſt; and they are all fulfilled to them, and enjoyed by them, who are ingrafted into, and one with Chriſt the ſeed; which cannot be, but by the grace, by the truth, by the light, life, Spirit, and power, which he ſows in the heart; which are not many things, but all contained and comprehended in the one ſeed.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, All the graces and virtues of God's Holy Spirit are hid and wrapped up in this one ſeed. There is nothing God can require of the ſoul, nor nothing the ſoul can deſire of God, but is hid and wrapped up in this ſeed. So that all that is needful, or all that can be deſired, is the growing and ſpreading of this ſeed in the ſoul, and the ſoul's gathering into it, and its living, dwelling, abiding, and acting in it. And oh! the great difference between the ſoul's ſelfiſh ſtriving and willing, and running, to join to God and Chriſt, and to live in God and Chriſt; and God's joining it to himſelf and his Son in this ſeed, and its living, willing, and acting, in the ſpringing life of this ſeed! To make this a little more plain and evident to the hearts of thoſe that deſire the true underſtanding of this thing, I ſhall inſtance in ſome particulars.

Firſt, The pure, living, heavenly knowledge of the Father, and of his Son Chriſt Jeſus, is wrapped up in this ſeed. God is light; and this ſeed, which comes from him, is not darkneſs, but light; and in the ſpringing light of this ſeed, God and Chriſt are revealed. The divine nature of them ſprings up in the ſeed (and if I know their nature, I know them); yea, here we (whom the Lord hath viſited, and ſhewn mercy to, though men deſpiſe us) know the righteous Spirit of Chriſt, the righteous nature of Chriſt, the righteous life of Chriſt, and feel him to be one with the Father, who begets of the ſame Spirit, nature, and life in us. And he that is born of the Spirit, is Spirit, and he that is united to the Lord is one Spirit; and he that is united to the ſeed, to the meaſure of grace and truth from Chriſt (wherein and whereby the ſoul is united), is united to God, and ingrafted into Chriſt; and as the ſeed is formed in him, Chriſt is formed in him; and as he is formed and new-created in the ſeed, he is the workmanſhip of God, formed and new-created in Chriſt.

Secondly, Faith, the true faith, the lively, effectual, ſaving, conquering faith, which gives victory over the world, and over the devil and his temptations, is contained or wrapped up in this ſeed. Faith is the gift of God, the precious gift of God; which is not found in man's nature, but ſprings and grows from the precious ſeed of the kingdom, which God ſows in man's heart. So that it is a gift to be waited for, and obtained from God. Therefore the apoſtle Peter, writing to the ſaints in his time, directs his epiſtle thus, *To them who have obtained like precious faith with us, through the righteouſneſs of God, and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt*, 2 Peter i. 1. Faith is a precious thing, a righteous thing, an holy thing, which God is the giver of, which Chriſt is the author and finiſher of; and it ſprings from the holy root, from the holy ſeed of life and righteouſneſs, which God ſows in the heart. This faith (I ſpeak not of man's ability of believing, or the faith which is found in man's nature) is the faith of God's elect, *Tit.* i. 1. The faith which God gives to them that are born of him, *John* i. 12, 13. who are born of the ſeed incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth for ever, 1 *Peter* i. 23. which word being nigh in the mouth and heart;

heart, and begetting, preſerving, and increaſing faith there (as is daily experienced plentifully, bleſſed be the Lord), is therefore called the word of faith, *Rom.* x. 8.

Thirdly, The pure fear, the holy fear, the heavenly fear, which is of a clean and heavenly nature, and endureth for ever, is alſo in this ſeed. The child-like fear is in the nature of the child; and the more it grows in the true child-like nature, the more it grows in this kindly fear, wherein there is no torment, but the pure pleaſure of life, and of holy obedience to the Father of life. The child-like fear is a promiſe of the new covenant; and given to the children of the new covenant, by virtue of the new covenant; God putting it into their hearts from the ſeed of life ſpringing up in them, which preſerves them from departing from the Lord, *Jer.* xxxii. 40.

Fourthly, The pure divine love is in it. As this ſprings, love to God ſprings. As God is love, ſo the ſeed that is of him partakes of love. There is no enmity in it, nor no enmity or ill-will ſprings from it. This is it that makes it ſo natural to the children of God to love; becauſe they are born of that ſeed which came from the God of love, whoſe nature is love. Oh! how daily is it found, by ſweet and certain experience, that this ſeed (ſpringing up) teacheth and enableth to love! And they that have this ſeed ſpringing up in them, need not to be writ to, or outwardly taught to love with the brotherly love; for in it, and by it, and through it, they are taught of God to love one another. So that there needs nothing but the circumciſing of the heart, the purifying of the heart, through the obedience of the truth, the cutting off of that fleſhly mind, nature, will, and wiſdom, which cannot love aright; and the pure love will ſpring up fully, towards the Lord, and towards the brethren, *Deut.* xxx. 6. 1 *Peter* i. 22. yea, it will be natural to love all; and that command of Chriſt's will not be grievous; namely, to love enemies, even the greateſt revilers, curſers, and perſecuters, *Matt.* v. 44.

Fifthly, The pure hope, the hope of the upright, the hope which makes not aſhamed, the hope which goes within the veil, and is a ſure and ſtedfaſt anchor there, ſtaying the mind upon the Lord, who keeps ſuch in perfect peace; this hope is contained in, and ſpringeth from, the ſeed. For nothing but that which comes from God (from the holy ſeed of truth and righteouſneſs), can ſtay the mind upon God. So that he that feels the ſeed, feels the hope; and keeping to the ſeed (to the holy root) to the end, the hope remains to the end. So the mind being turned to the light, being turned from Satan's power to God, being turned to Chriſt, being turned to the appearance and voice of the word of life within, being turned from the ſeed of wickedneſs and darkneſs, to the holy and righteous ſeed of the kingdom, it is turned to the hope, it is turned to that which begets a true and right hope in the heart; which hopes in God's love, hopes in God's mercy, hopes in God's kind, tender, and faithful nature; and hath no confidence nor hope in the fleſh, but in the holy and heavenly ſeed, and work of righteouſneſs and of the kingdom; which is God's battle-axe and weapon

of

of war, whereby he brings down the fleſh. This hope ſtays the mind in every temptation, in every diſtreſs, in every trial, in all the winds, ſtorms, and waves of perſecution that it can be aſſaulted with. For in this ſeed the root of Jeſſe is felt, the everlaſting rock and foundation of life is felt; and here the God of hope fills his, that are gathered hither, and abide here, with all joy and peace in believing, that they may abound in hope, thro' the power of the Holy Ghoſt, *Rom.* xv. 12, 13.

Sixthly, The true patience, which obtains the crown, which makes perfect and entire; ſo that there is nothing wanting, where it hath its perfect work (*Jam.* i. 4.); the patience which enables quietly to ſuffer any chaſtiſement from God, or any affliction, or hard dealing from men, it is contained in, and given with, this ſeed. As God is patient, and long-ſuffering, ſo this ſeed is alſo. It is man that is of the brittle, fretful, impatient nature; but he that receiveth the Word of faith, the ſeed of faith, in it he receiveth faith and patience alſo: ſo that to him it is not only given to believe, but to ſuffer alſo for the ſake of Chriſt; and he that abides in the ſeed, and feels the ſeed remaining in him, and its nature prevailing, can never be impatient, whatſoever the Lord ſuffers to befal him.

Seventhly, The Lamb's meekneſs is in it. Where ſhould the Lamb's meekneſs be found, but in his Father's ſeed, or in the ſeed of his Father's kingdom? Here the meek and quiet Spirit is received, witneſſed, and enjoyed, which in the ſight of God is of much price. This ſeed is ſowed or begotten in the womb of the heavenly wiſdom; and the meekneſs of wiſdom, the true meekneſs of the true wiſdom, is found in it. Here the ſtill, ſoft, gentle, lamb-like nature grows up, wherein there is none of Eſau's roughneſs.

Eighthly, Here poverty of Spirit, true poverty of Spirit, is witneſſed. He is poor indeed who hath ſold all, and hath nothing left him but this ſeed, and the appearance and help of God in this ſeed; which is not in his own hands neither, but in the will and diſpoſal of God.

Ninthly, Here mercifulneſs towards others is experienced: for he that is brought hither lives only by mercy; and he that lives by mercy, and is daily what he is by mercy, cannot but be merciful unto others.

Tenthly, Here the true mourning and lamenting after the Lord, and his precious life and preſence, and becauſe of the preſence or power of that which hinders the growth of the ſeed, and the ſoul's union with, and enjoyment of, the Lord in it, is witneſſed. For the true mourning, to which the bleſſedneſs belongs, is of God, from the living ſenſe that ariſeth from his pure ſeed in the heart; and bleſſed indeed are they that thus mourn, for they ſhall be comforted.

Eleventhly, The true hungering and thirſting after righteouſneſs ariſeth from this ſeed. It is the ſeed of God, the birth of God, that which hath the ſenſe of the excellency of his righteouſneſs, that hungers and thirſts after his righteouſneſs.

Twelfthly, The true ſobriety, moderation, and temperance ariſeth from this ſeed; and they that are joined to the ſeed, and are and act in the

ſeed, eaſily learn ſuch ſobriety, moderation, and temperance, as they that are out of it cannot poſſibly learn.

Laſtly, To name no more, the croſs which mortifies and crucifies to the world and to ſin, can only be taken up in the ſeed, or by virtue of the ſeed. Indeed the ſeed is a croſs; yea, enmity to the ſerpent's nature, ſpirit, and courſe; and he that takes it up, its will, its nature, its law of life, takes up the croſs to the other nature, will, and the law of ſin and death. So that ſly the holy ſeed, and thou haſt only a ſhadow or appearance of the croſs; but in a ſenſe of, and ſubjection to the ſeed, the croſs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is felt, working powerfully againſt ſin, and the whole courſe of the evil and ſinful nature, effectually crucifying and ſubduing it.

Fourthly, The fourth thing which is hid or wrapped up in the precious ſeed, which is the laſt that remains to be mentioned by me at this time, is this; The new covenant, which God makes with the new Iſrael, by which he makes the heart new, and writes his law in it, and takes away the ſtony heart, and heals all their backſlidings, and loves them freely, and puts his Spirit within them, cauſing them to walk in his ways, and to keep his ſtatutes and judgments, and do them; even the holy agreement of the ſoul with God in Chriſt Jeſus, is in this ſeed.

God gave Chriſt for a covenant, and the ſeed of grace and truth comes by Jeſus Chriſt; which is of his nature, of him the covenant; and all that receive this grace and truth from him, this holy ſeed of the kingdom, they receive the covenant; and they that walk in it, walk in the covenant.

Here, and here alone, the new creation in Chriſt Jeſus is known.

Here, and here alone, the coming to God by Chriſt is truly underſtood and witneſſed.

Here, and here alone, the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus is writ in the heart.

Keep here, thou never goeſt out of the holy agreement with God and with Chriſt; for in this grace and truth, in this ſeed of life, there is nothing that diſagrees with them. Here thou liveſt in the Spirit, walkeſt in the Spirit, and doſt not, canſt not, fulfill the luſts of the fleſh. There is nothing here that will either diſpleaſe God, or lead thy ſoul aſide from him; but here the Lord guides the feet of his ſaints, and teacheth all of them (from the leaſt babe of them, to the higheſt growth), and puts his law of life and new obedience, and his holy Spirit, into their hearts, that none of their ſteps may ſlide. Here the way of holineſs, wherein God preſerves his from erring, *Iſa.* xxxv. 8. is known and walked in. Yea, here Chriſt is known and felt to be the way, the truth, and the life. The ſheep that are gathered hither, and come hither, are returned to the Biſhop and Shepherd of their ſouls, who watcheth over them, and powerfully preſerveth them, that they run aſtray no more. For whither ſhould they go, or whom ſhould they hear, when they have found him, and know his voice, with whom are the words of eternal life?

I ſhall

I ſhall conclude this head with that precious ſcripture, 1 *Cor.* i. 30, *But of him are ye in Chriſt Jeſus, who of God is made unto us wiſdom, and righteouſneſs, and ſanctification, and redemption.* How are we of God in Chriſt Jeſus, but by this ſeed of God, by being born of the Spirit of God, by being begotten out of the ſpirit of the world, into the nature and Spirit of Chriſt, from this immortal and incorruptible ſeed of life, truth, grace, and Spirit? And how do we put on Chriſt, but by putting on this ſeed? And how do we grow up in Chriſt, but by the growing up in this ſeed, and feeling this ſeed grow up in us? And here, in truth and demonſtration of God's Spirit, we are formed in Chriſt, and Chriſt formed in us, as this ſeed groweth up into a form and ſhape in us, and we into a form and ſhape in it. Now we cannot receive this ſeed, but as we part with and deny our own wiſdom and fleſhly confidence; and denying that, and crying to God for wiſdom, God brings up the wiſdom of the ſeed in us, and makes Chriſt become unto us wiſdom therein. And we cannot hunger after the true righteouſneſs, the heavenly righteouſneſs, the righteouſneſs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, but as we ſee the loathſomeneſs of, and put off, our own righteouſneſs; and then becoming naked, we are taught of God to buy white raiment of him, which is the righteouſneſs of the ſaints, and ſo he becomes our righteouſneſs, made ſo of God to us.

And he is the purger and cleanſer of ſin and unholineſs out of our hearts and lives, and the holy leavener and ſanctifier of our hearts; ſo that we have nothing of holineſs, but what we have of him and in him. And he is our redemption; our redemption is by him and through him, our redemption is wrought and preſerved by him, and enjoyed in him; yea he is made of God unto us redemption. So that having him, we have redemption through his blood; yea, he is our redeemer and redemption for evermore. Alas! what is it to get notions of theſe things into the outward comprehenſion! but to feel them livingly in the heart, is life and peace for evermore; and the knowledge of this ſeed of the kingdom, and of God and Chriſt in this ſeed, is the moſt precious knowledge that can be deſired, obtained, or enjoyed.

II.

The Nature of this Seed.

WHAT is the nature of the ſeed of God, or the ſeed of the kingdom?

Anſw. Though the nature of it hath been largely ſignified already, under the foregoing head (for the mentioning of what is wrapped up in it, abundantly ſheweth its nature), yet I ſhall ſpeak a little more punctually and expreſly of it in ſeveral particulars, according to the ſcriptures, that the reader may have the more diſtinct ſenſe and inward apprehenſion of it, the Lord opening his heart in reading theſe things.

Firſt, It is of an immortal, incorruptible nature, 1 *Peter* i. 23. It is a

ſeed that can never die in itſelf, though it may be as it were dead in man, or unto man, not putting forth any of its hidden life or virtue in the man that hath ſlain it as to himſelf; who having ſlain that whereby God gives life, is dead in treſpaſſes and in ſins, and cannot live any more, till God breathe upon and quicken this ſeed in him, and him by this ſeed. This is a great myſtery. Doubtleſs the ſeed of life and godlineſs, wherein the life and godlineſs of the ſoul lies hid, muſt needs be a great myſtery, and cannot be known but as God reveals it.

Secondly, Its of a gathering nature. It is of the nature of a net, *Matt.* xiii. 47. It gathers out of that which is contrary to God, unto God. It gathers out of the world, out of the ſea of wickedneſs, out of the kingdom of darkneſs, out of a man's own nature and ſpirit, into God's nature and Spirit, and his light and kingdom, wherein the ſoul ſhould dwell, and walk, and be ſubject, with God.

Thirdly, It is of a purging, cleanſing nature. It is of the nature of fire, of the nature of water, inwardly and ſpiritually. This ſeed is Spirit and life in a meaſure; and by it, or by God's Spirit which dwells and is revealed in it, he waſheth and purgeth away the filth of the daughter of Sion, and the blood of Jeruſalem from the midſt thereof. There is ſtrength in this ſeed, and virtue in this ſeed, againſt all the ſtrength of deceit and wickedneſs in the other ſeed; and as it ſprings up, and is received and joined to in the holy fear of the Lord, it prevails over it, and caſteth away its darkneſs, and purgeth away and burneth up its filth, chaff, and corruption.

Fourthly, It is of a ſeaſoning, leavening, ſanctifying nature. It is like ſalt, it is like leaven. It ſeaſons and leavens with life. It ſeaſons and leavens with righteouſneſs. It ſeaſons and leavens with the image of God. So ſoon as ever it ſprings in the heart, it begins to leaven it; and if it be not ſnibbed, or grieved, or hurt, or quenched (for it is of a moſt ſenſible tender nature), it will go on leavening more and more with the nature of truth, into the likeneſs of the God of truth. *Mark* ix. 50. *Luke* xiii. 21. *Col.* iv. 6.

Fifthly, It is of an enriching nature. It is a hidden treaſure or pearl of great price. It makes the wiſe merchant very rich, who ſells all for it, and buys the field and it. He that buys the truth, and will by no means ſell or part with it, but gives up to it, and makes it his treaſure, oh! how doth it enrich his heart with that which is holy and heavenly! How rich doth it make him towards God! *Matt.* xiii. 44. 46.

Sixthly, It is of an improving, growing nature, of a nature that will grow and may be improved. The one talent may be increaſed into more. The little ſeed, like a grain of muſtard-ſeed, will grow in the good ground beyond all herbs, and become a tree, a tree of righteouſneſs of the Lord's planting, that he may be glorified, *Matt.* xiii. 31, 32. *chap.* xxv. 16. *chap.* viii. 23.

III. *Of*

III.

Of the Effects.

WHAT are the effects of this ſeed?

Anſw. The effects of the pure ſeed in the heart are very many, very great, very ſweet, precious and bleſſed, which every one comes to experience, that experienceth the growth and ſpreading of it. I ſhall inſtance only in ſome few, to give a taſte thereof.

The firſt I ſhall mention is, union and communion with God the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the Father of this ſeed, and of all that are united to it. Union and communion with God is ſtill in this ſeed, and never out of it. For as in the ſeed of the Serpent a man is ſeparated from God, alienated from his life, and can never come near him, nor have fellowſhip with him; ſo in the holy ſeed, in the ſeed of life, and in the ſeed of righteouſneſs, in the ſeed of faith, the ſoul is united to God, hath acceſs to him, the living fountain, and hath fellowſhip with him in that which is living and holy of him. Men may imagine an union and communion with God out of this, but none can truly unite to God, or have fellowſhip with him, but in the gift, in the grace, in the light, in the ſpirit which is of God.

Secondly, This ſeed felt ſpringing in the heart, and joined to, brings down and keeps down all that is contrary to God. This honour and power God hath given to the ſeed of the woman (even to the leaſt meaſure of it) that it ſhould bruiſe the Serpent's head, and free the ſoul from captivity and ſlavery to the wicked one. So that the ſoul, in the living ſenſe, authority, and virtue of this, may refuſe yielding its members, its faculties, its will, its mind, its underſtanding, its affections to ſin and unrighteouſneſs. Yea, the devil, the great red dragon, the god of the world, the mighty ſpirit and power of darkneſs, being reſiſted in this, is ſtill overcome. When any reſiſt the devil in their own ſtrength (in the ſtrength of their own deſires, abilities, and reſolutions) he ſtill overcomes them; but they that reſiſt the devil in the faith that ſprings from this ſeed, ſtill overcome him. So that ſin is brought down, and temptations kept out of, by the virtue and power of the life and authority of the Saviour, that ſprings up in this ſeed of God, which the ſoul that is joined to (leavened with, and tranſplanted into) partakes of.

Thirdly, As it ſprings, and its operations are felt and received, it brings into the image and nature of God. It blots out the devil's image in the mind, and makes like God and like Chriſt. Yea, here we have the very mind of Chriſt, and are one with the mind of Chriſt. As in the Serpent's ſeed, the Serpent's image and nature is put on; ſo in this ſeed, the image of God and Chriſt is put on. Yea, the ſerpent, the dark ſpirit, the wicked ſpirit, the deceitful ſpirit, is here put off, and Chriſt is put on; and whoever would know the real putting off of the old man, and the putting on

of

of the new man, which is created in the righteouſneſs and holineſs of truth, muſt know it in this ſeed. Here the truth is known as it is in Jeſus, in its effectual power and virtue, putting off the old image and nature, and putting on the new, even the heavenly divine image and nature.

Fourthly, It brings the mind, the heart, the ſoul, the ſpirit, into the new obedience (into its own obedient nature), even to do the will of God with great delight and pleaſure. I delight to do thy will, ſaid Chriſt. This ſeed is of his nature. It is a meaſure, a proportion, an heavenly talent of his grace and truth; a gift of light and life from him, the fullneſs, given to make willing (like him) to do the Father's will, and it really doth ſo, inſomuch as the ſoul, that is throughly leavened and one with it, can alſo ſay, I likewiſe delight to do thy will, O God! it is become my meat and drink; for I am nouriſhed, refreſhed, and delighted with the virtue that I feel ſpring in me, in doing thy will. Indeed, it is not ſo at firſt, while there is a nature, a will, a wiſdom contrary to the nature, will, and wiſdom of God; obedience is then hard, the croſs is then a ſore yoke upon my neck. But that nature being ſubdued, and the nature of the ſeed coming up and prevailing, what can be more delightful to this new nature, than to do the will of its heavenly Father, and to find the heart of the Father pleaſed with the child, which it always is, while the child is in tenderneſs of ſpirit, in the holy faith, and in the holy obedience to him!

Fifthly, It brings into the underſtanding, ſenſe, and enjoyment of all the precious promiſes, and to the partaking of all the ſpiritual bleſſings in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord. All the promiſes are to the ſeed, and Yea and Amen in Chriſt; and the leaſt meaſure of his life hath a ſhare therein. The ſeed, the everlaſting ſeed is the heir; and we joined to the ſeed, born of the ſeed, growing up in the ſeed, are joint-heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Chriſt. So that every promiſe comes to be underſtood here, taſted of here, enjoyed here. How full are the ſcriptures of ſweet and precious promiſes! Alas! what is it for men to apply them to themſelves, when they have no right to them, nor indeed rightly underſtand them, nor were they intended by the Lord to their preſent ſtates and conditions. But to come to the true underſtanding of the promiſes, to be led by the Lord into that condition, and preſerved by him in that condition, to which the promiſes belong, and to have him bring home the promiſes to the heart, and drop in the ſweet, healing, delighting, refreſhing virtue of them; oh! how ſweet, comforting, and gladding is this! Indeed in this ſeed all the curſes of the book paſs away, and all the bleſſings flow in, and multiply on the ſoul day by day. So that this may well be called the bleſſed ſeed; for in it the ſoul is bleſſed, and filled with bleſſings by him who is able to multiply them upon the ſoul, and to guide the ſoul in the ſafe and right uſe and enjoyment of them.

But what need I mention any more? Here is light, here is life, here is righteouſneſs, here is peace, here is heavenly joy, here is the holy power, ſpringing and bringing forth their fruits, and precious operations and effects

in

in the heart; and here is aſſurance of the love of God in Chriſt for ever, and that God will never leave nor forſake that ſoul which is joined to him, and abides with him in this ſeed; but it ſhall be kept by the power of God, through the faith that ſprings from this ſeed, unto perfect redemption and ſalvation. *Amen.*

SOME

QUERIES

CONCERNING

GOD's KINGDOM;

Whereby the SEED thereof may be the better Illuſtrated and Underſtood.

Query 1. WHAT is the kingdom of God, which Chriſt ſaid he muſt preach to other cities alſo? For therefore was he ſent, *Luke* iv. 43.

Query 2. What is the kingdom of heaven, which firſt John the forerunner, and then Jeſus himſelf, when he began to preach, bid men repent, becauſe it was at hand? *Matt.* iii. 2. and *chap.* iv. 13. What would repentance advantage men? Would it fit men for entrance thereinto? Did thoſe that truly repented and believed, come out of the kingdom of darkneſs and Satan, and enter into the kingdom of the dear Son? 2 *Peter* i. 10, 11.

Query 3. What is the kingdom of God, and the righteouſneſs of God, which Chriſt (the everlaſting, wiſe, and holy counſellor) adviſeth men firſt to ſeek? *Luke* vi. 33. Where is this kingdom to be found? Where is this righteouſneſs to be found? What is it hid and wrapped up in? Can it be found in any thing but what it is hid by God and wrapped up in?

Query 4. What kind of poverty of ſpirit is it, and who are thoſe poor in ſpirit, to whom the kingdom of heaven belongs? *Matt.* v. 3.

Query 5. How may men know, when the kingdom of God is come unto them? Is it not then manifeſt, when the ſtronger than the ſtrong man, not only knocks at the door of the heart, but caſts out Satan thence, and maketh ſpoil of his goods? *Matt.* xii. 28, 29.

Query

Query 6. Who are they that ſhall enter into the kingdom of God? Are they not they who are born of water and of the Spirit? *John* iii. 5. Of what water? And how muſt they be born of the Spirit? Were not this worth the knowing? And they that become as little children; ſimple, innocent (not wiſe or knowing after the fleſh) that know the breaſt that is natural and proper for them, and thirſt after and drink in the ſincere milk of the word of life, from the breaſt of the heavenly wiſdom? *Luke* xviii. 17. 1 *Peter* ii. 2.

Query 7. Who ſhall in no wiſe enter into the kingdom of heaven? Shall not all they be excluded who want the wedding garment, who want the true righteouſneſs? *Matt.* v. 20.

Query 8. What are the glad tidings of the kingdom of God? Is it not that the kingdom of God is come, and that his reign is ſet up, and ſeeting up therein? *Luke* viii. 1. *Iſa.* lii. 7.

Query 9. Who are they, before whom publicans and harlots ſhall enter into the kingdom of God? *Matt.* xxi. 31. Who were they in that age? And who are they in this age? Oh! that men had hearts rightly to conſider and underſtand!

Query 10. Who are they that the kingdom of God ſhall be taken from, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof? Are they not the wrong builders in every age, and ſuch as are taught, by the wrong builders, to reject the living ſtone? *ver.* 42, 43.

Query 11. Who are the children of the kingdom that ſhall be caſt out into utter darkneſs, where ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of teeth? *Matt.* viii. 12.

Query 12. Who are thoſe God reveals the myſteries of the kingdom to in every age? (Are they not his begotten ones, his babes in the Spirit?) And who are thoſe that he hides the myſtery of the kingdom of life and ſalvation, and the way thereof from in every age? (Are they not the wiſe and prudent in their own apprehenſions of the letter, without the Spirit?) *Matt.* xiii. 11. and *chap.* xi. 15.

Query 13. Who are thoſe that are nigh the kingdom of God? Are they not thoſe who know that love is the fulfilling of the law, and that the ſubſtance is beyond ſhadows? *Mark* xii. 33, 34.

Query 14. Who are thoſe that ſhut up the kingdom of heaven againſt men? Are they not thoſe who take upon them to expound the letter to men, and do not turn men to the Spirit, but quench it both in themſelves and others? *Matt.* xxiii. 13. *Luke* xi. 52. *Iſa.* xxii. 22.

Query 15. What kingdom is that, wherein he that is leaſt is greater than the greateſt prophet? Wherein he that is feeble ſhall be as David, and the houſe of David as God, as the angel of the Lord before the inhabitants of Jeruſalem? *Matt.* xi. 11. *Zac.* xii. 8.

Query 16. Who were they in the apoſtles age (and are there any ſuch in this

this age?) Who ſhall not taſte of death outwardly, till they have ſeen the kingdom of God come with power inwardly? *Mark* ix. 1.

Query 17. What kind of looking back is that, which makes a man unfit for the kingdom of God? Is it not a looking back from the plough, and not forward to the plough? And what plough is it a man muſt put his hand to, and not look back, that he may be fit for the kingdom of God? *Luke* ix. 62.

Query 18. What hand, what foot, what eye is it, which a man may enter into the kingdom of God with? And what hand, what foot, what eye is it, which a man cannot enter into the kingdom of God withal? *Mark* ix. 47.

Query 19. What is it to eat bread in the kingdom of God? Is not there the feaſt of fat things, and of wines well refined, made to the ſoul; and doth it not there ſup with Chriſt, and Chriſt with it? And is not the wine of the kingdom there drunk new and freſh with Chriſt? *Luke* xiv. 15. *Iſa.* xxv. 6. *Rev.* iii. 20. *Mark* xiv. 25. *Luke* xxii. 16, 18. Shall not the mountains there drop down new wine, and the hills flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah flow with water? And ſhall not a fountain come forth out of the houſe of the Lord, and water the valley of Shittim? *Joel* iii. 18.

Query 20. How may one become as a little child, that he may receive the kingdom? Muſt not that man be born anew? Muſt he not be unborn after the fleſh, and born after the Spirit? (And not only ſo, but he muſt receive, and enter into and abide in the kingdom in that child-like ſimplicity, and innocent wiſdom, whereof he is born)? *Luke* xviii. 7. *John* iii. 3.

Query 21. What is that fleſh and blood which cannot inherit the kingdom of God, and that corruption which cannot put on incorruption? 1 *Cor.* xv. 50. (Let him that readeth underſtand the thing, both in the letter and in the Spirit).

Query 22. Who are the unrighteous, that ſhall not inherit the kingdom of God? Are they not both the manifeſtly unrighteous, and alſo the ſecretly unrighteous; who, though they may preach faith in Chriſt, and the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and may think themſelves believers in him, and cloathed with his righteouſneſs, yet have not received power to become the ſons of God, nor through the Spirit have mortified the deeds of the body; but, at laſt, notwithſtanding all their profeſſion and pretence to Chriſt's righteouſneſs (out of the faith that works by love, and out of the fine linnen, in their own filthy rags); are found by him workers of iniquity, 1 *Cor.* vi. 6. *Luke* xiii. 26. *Rom.* viii. 13. 1 *John* iii. 7.

Query 23. Shall any enter into the kingdom of heaven, but they that do the will of Chriſt's Father which is in heaven? Is it enough to pray, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven? Is it not neceſſary alſo to receive

that power which makes willing, and that nature and Spirit whoſe delight it is to do the will of the Father? *Matt.* vii. 21.

Query 24. Who ſhall be counted worthy of the kingdom of God? Shall not they who ſuffer for it in the holy faith and patience, and ſo are willing through the much tribulation (whether outward or inward, or both) to enter into it? *Theſſ.* i. 4, 5. *Acts* xiv. 22.

Query 25. What are the keys of the kingdom of heaven? who hath need of them, and whom are they given unto? Were they given only to the apoſtles? Or only to the miniſters of the church? Are they not given to every one that hath need of them, to whom God giveth underſtanding to open the myſteries of the kingdom with them? *Matt.* xvi. 19. The lawyers were blamed for taking away the key of knowledge, *Luke* xi. 52. Then they from whom they took it, ſhould have had it, that they might have entered into the kingdom of heaven by it, and not have been hindered from entering for want of it; and they taking it away from others loſt it themſelves; for when Chriſt came and preached the kingdom, they could not ſee to enter into it, but were blind and oppoſed it, *Matt.* xxiii. 13. And now, under the goſpel, if any man have not the Spirit of Chriſt, he is none of his (he is not the Father's child, who hath not the Father's Spirit to lead him, *Rom.* viii. 4.); and he that hath the Spirit of Chriſt, hath he not the key of knowledge? 1 *Cor.* ii. 10, 11.

Query 26. What is the joyful ſound, which they that know are bleſſed? Is it not the teſtimony of the kingdom? Is it not the preaching of the goſpel of the kingdom? Which they that repent, and become little children, being begotten and born of the Spirit, believing in the Spirit and power of the Lord Jeſus, enter into, and walk in, the light of God's countenance there, *Pſa.* lxxxix. 15. *Gal.* iv. 15.

Query 27. Which is the joyful ſound of the everlaſting goſpel to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, after the ages of the great apoſtaſy from the ſpirit and power of the apoſtles? Is it not this, *Fear God, and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment is come; and worſhip the Great Creator in ſpirit and in truth?* He that heareth this ſound, in the evidence and demonſtration of God's Spirit, doth he not hear the goſpel? He that indeed knoweth this ſound, doth he not know the joyful goſpel-ſound? And he that believeth and obeyeth it, doth he not believe and obey the goſpel, even as God hath appointed it to be preached, and obeyed by all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people? *Rev.* xiv. 6, 7.

Query 28. What is that kingdom that cometh not with obſervation, but is inward, and to be found within? Where men need not ſay, lo here, or lo there, but may find the Meſſiah, and his light ſhining in upon them? *Luke* xvii. 20, 21. 2 *Cor.* iv. 6.

Query 29. What is that kingdom which ſtands not in word, but in power; nor is meat and drink, but righteouſneſs, and peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghoſt? 1 *Cor.* iv. 20. *Rom.* xiv. 17.

Query

Query 30. What is it to come unto and viſit the churches of Chriſt, in the fullneſs of the bleſſing of the goſpel of Chriſt? Is it not to come in the fullneſs of God's Spirit and power, to feed them with the bread of life, to fill their hearts with the ſtrength and virtue of life from God, as the Lord ſhall pleaſe to drop it into their ſpirits through them, and to build them up in the holy faith, that at length they may be filled with all the fullneſs of God? *John* xxi. 15, 16, 17. *Rom.* xxv. 29. *Eph.* iii. 19.

Query 31. Whom will the Lord aſſemble? And whom will he gather to make up his kingdom of, in the days of the goſpel? Will not the Lord aſſemble her that halteth, and gather her that is driven out, and her that he hath afflicted? And will not he make her that halted, a remnant; and her that was caſt off, a ſtrong nation? And ſhall not the Lord reign over them in Mount Sion, from henceforth, even for ever? (For when Chriſt, the inward and ſpiritual King, comes to ſit on the throne of his Father David, inwardly and ſpiritually, he ſhall reign over the houſe of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there ſhall be no end, *Luke* i. 32, 33.) *Mic.* iv. 6, 7. *Ezek.* xxxiv. 16.

Query 32. What are the places wherein the ſheep of God have been ſcattered, in the cloudy and dark day, which the Lord promiſed to deliver them out of? And what is the good paſture he will feed them in, after he hath delivered them? And what are the high mountains of Iſrael, where their fold and fat paſtures ſhall be? Are not thoſe things to be fulfilled to the ſpiritual people, in the inward and ſpiritual kingdom of the Meſſiah? *Ezek.* xxxiv. 12. 14. *John* x. 3, 4.—9.—27, 28.

AN

EPISTLE

TO ALL

SERIOUS PROFESSORS

OF THE

CHRISTIAN RELIGION:

WHEREIN

A BRIEF TOUCH of my Knowledge, Senſe, Belief, and Experience concerning the Godhead, the Offering up of the LORD JESUS CHRIST in his Body on the Tree, as a Propitiatory Sacrifice to the FATHER, and the Imputation of his Righteouſneſs to thoſe who believe in his Name and Power, is nakedly laid before them; wherein I am not alone, but one with thoſe who have ſo learned and experienced the ſame in the Leadings and Light of his HOLY SPIRIT.

Written in Love to them (that they might have the better Underſtanding of us, as to theſe Things, and might not think otherwiſe either of us, or of the Truth of our GOD, which we bear witneſs to, than there is Cauſe, to their own Hurt and Prejudice),

ISAAC PENINGTON.

AN EPISTLE TO All SERIOUS PROFESSORS, &c.

FRIENDS,

AFTER it pleaſed the Lord to touch my heart with the ſenſe of his truth, and to manifeſt unto me the principle of his life, in the demonſtration and power of his own Spirit, inſomuch as I could reaſon, diſpute, conſider about it no longer, but was fully ſatisfied concerning it; I ſay, after this, the love of God ſprang in me towards you, and pure deſires and breatheings unto him, that ye alſo might have the way caſt up before you, and might ſo walk therein, as to come to partake of the ſame mercy and ſalvation. How I have mourned before the Lord for you, and deſired that the ſtumbling-blocks might be removed from you, and that ye might ſo ſeek as to obtain (not in that wiſdom and diſputing mind, which ſtill is ſhut out; but in that meekneſs, humility, and fear which gives entrance) the Lord God knoweth. Yea, the deſires in me after you are ſtill living; who knoweth, but the Lord may at length hear, and with his key ſo open your hearts, and ſo anoint your eyes with his eye-ſalve, that ye may ſee, acknowledge, believe in, and receive the beloved of your ſouls, even as he now appears (after the long night of darkneſs) a comforter of the drooping ſpirits of his people, with the pure light of life, wherein the redeemed houſe of Jacob (who ſat in darkneſs, and in the valley of the ſhadow of death, mourning after him) now in holy rejoicing, and pure joy of ſpirit, walk before him? Oh! the Lord God viſit you, and break in upon you, as he hath done upon us, and cauſe you to ſet to your ſeals alſo, as we could not but do, that this is he whom all our days we waited for, and longed after. And now there are two or three things in my heart to open to you, how

how it is with me in reference to them; for indeed I have not been taught to deny any teſtimony the ſcriptures hold forth, concerning the Lord Jeſus, or any of his appearances, but am taught by the Lord more certainly and fully to own and acknowledge them.

The firſt is concerning the Godhead, which we own as the ſcriptures expreſs it, and as we have the ſenſible, experimental knowledge of it. In which, *There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and theſe Three are One*, 1 John v. 7. This I believe from my heart, and have infallible demonſtrations of; for I know three and feel three in ſpirit, even an eternal Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, which are but one eternal God. And I feel them alſo one, and have fellowſhip with them (through the tender mercy of the Lord) in their life, and in their redeeming power. And here I lie low before the Lord in the ſenſible life, not deſiring to know and comprehend notionally, but to feel the thing inwardly, truly, ſenſibly, and effectually; yea, indeed, this is to me far beyond what I formerly knew notionally concerning them, and I cannot but invite others hither.

Now conſider ſeriouſly, if a man from his heart believe thus concerning the eternal power and God-head; that the Father is God, the Word God, the Holy Spirit God, and that theſe are one eternal God, waiting ſo to know God, and to be ſubject to him accordingly; is not this man in a right frame of heart towards the Lord in this reſpect? Indeed friends, we do know God ſenſibly and experimentally to be a Father, Word, and Spirit, and we worſhip the Father in the Son by his own Spirit, and here meet with the ſeal of acceptance with him. Nor would we contend with you about your crimes in this reſpect, but that ye provoke us thereunto, in laying to our charge as if we denied the thing; whereas we do not, nor can deny the expreſſions which the ſcripture uſeth, nor our own ſenſe and experience concerning the thing. I pray let this ſuffice, and let us all ſtrive to know God (and his Son Jeſus Chriſt) in his life, Spirit, and power, wherein is unity and true demonſtration; and not contend about ſuch expreſſions concerning things, as are beſide the ſcriptures. For would not ye yourſelves think it hard (I mean ſuch of you as read the ſcriptures ſeriouſly, deſiring to underſtand and obſerve what is written therein) to have a belief of things impoſed on you otherwiſe than is there written, and otherwiſe than ye have the ſenſe, knowledge, and experience of them from the Lord?

The ſecond is concerning the offering of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, without the gates of Jeruſalem. I do exceedingly honour and eſteem that offering, believing it had relation to the ſins of the whole world, and was a propitiatory ſacrifice to the Father therefore. And ſurely he that is redeemed out of the world up to God by Chriſt, cannot deny that Chriſt was his ranſom, and that he was bought with a price, and therefore is to glorify God, with his body and ſpirit, which are God's, 1 *Cor.* vi. 20. And, ſaith the apoſtle

apoſtle Peter, ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as ſilver and gold, from your vain converſation, *&c.* but with the precious blood of Chriſt, as of a Lamb without blemiſh and without ſpot, 1 *Peter* i. 18, 19. who ſo offered himſelf up to God through the eternal Spirit, *Heb.* ix. 14. This we do own ſingly and nakedly, as in the ſight of the Lord; though I muſt confeſs we do not lay the ſole ſtreſs upon that which is outward and viſible (though we truly and fully acknowledge it in its place), but upon that which is inward and inviſible; upon the inward life, the inward power, the Spirit within; knowing and experiencing daily, that that is it which doth the work. The outward fleſh is not the meat indeed, nor the outward blood the drink indeed; but it is the Spirit, the life, the ſubſtance, which the birth that is born of the Spirit feeds upon and lives by. Oh! conſider ſeriouſly, and wait on the Lord, rightly to underſtand that ſcripture, *John* vi. 63. *It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the fleſh profiteth nothing; the words that I ſpeak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life.* What doth this ſcripture lay the ſtreſs upon? Is it not upon the quickening Spirit, and the words which the quickening Spirit ſpeaketh to the ſoul, which are living, and give life to thoſe that hear them? *Hear, and your ſoul ſhall live!* Hear his voice who giveth life, and your ſouls ſhall live by him; but can any one live without hearing the voice of him, who alone is able to quicken and raiſe the ſoul from death, and out of the grave of ſin?

The third thing is concerning the imputation of Chriſt's righteouſneſs, to ſuch as believe in his name and power, which we have felt, witneſſed, and own to be thus.

God viſits men by the light and power of his Holy Spirit, in their dead and dark eſtate, even while they are ungodly. Now, they that feel life, and in the quickenings of life, by the faith which comes from life, turn to the light and power which viſits them, by this faith in the power, they are in meaſure tranſplanted out of the unholy root, into the holy root, where they partake of the nature and virtue of the true olive-tree; and the mercy of the Lord in and through his Son Jeſus Chriſt, is ſpread over them, and their iniquities are pardoned, and their tranſgreſſions done away for his name ſake, and they are reckoned by God, not as in the old root and unholy nature, but that whereon they lay hold by faith, and are in union with, they are reckoned by in the eye of the Lord; and they are accepted and beloved in him in whom they are found, by him who tranſplanted them there, and ingrafted them thereinto. So that Chriſt is really theirs, and they his; and what he did for them in his body of fleſh is become theirs, and they have the benefit, and reap the ſweet fruits of it. And if they ſin afterwards, they have an advocate who pleads their cauſe with the Father, and who breathes livingly upon them again, and quickens faith in them, and gives them to turn from that which ran after them, and overtook them and defiled them. So that in this ſtate of true faith in, and union with, the Son, the fountain is felt ſet open for ſin and for uncleanneſs, which

daily

daily waſheth away the pollutions and ſtains of the mind, which it is liable to in the travelling ſtate.

But now to every faith this doth not belong, but to the faith only which flows from the power of the endleſs life, and which ſtands in the power. The faith which is from the power is precious, having a precious nature and virtue in it, and very precious effects flow from it. For it is the ſubſtance of things hoped for; it is of a pure nature, which hath dominion, and giveth dominion over the wicked one. There is no overcoming of the ſaints here; for as it came from the power, ſo it ſtands near the power, and engages the power of life againſt the enemy, and ſo is ſtill too hard for him: For he that reſiſteth the enemy in the true faith, ſtill overcomes him and makes him fly, *James* iv. 7. But that belief on Chriſt, and applying his righteouſneſs, which is not of this faith, nor in the true light of life, but according to the creature's apprehenſions concerning things, that is not of the ſame nature with this, nor hath the ſame virtue, nor produceth the ſame effects; but notwithſtanding ſuch a believing and hoping, men are ſtill in their ſins, and they are not waſhed away from them by the blood of Chriſt, nor remitted or covered by the Spirit of the Lord. And oh! that men were wary, and did take heed in this matter, that they might not miſs of true pardon from the Lord, and ſo find their ſins bound by him, in the days of his refreſhing others!

For there is a ſtate, wherein there is an imputation of Chriſt's righteouſneſs to perſons reached to by the power of the Lord, and coming up out of the ungodly ſtate, and ſo a real bringing into the righteouſneſs. For in the true growth the ſoul daily grows more and more out of its own righteouſneſs, out of the dark, corrupt image, into the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and into his pure image. Thus Chriſt is formed in the hearts of them that truly believe, daily more and more; they receiving him as an heavenly leaven, and giving up to be leavened by him, are changed daily more and more into the newneſs of Spirit, even until they become a new lump, even a lump wholly leavened, ſo that old things are paſſed away, and all things become new; that is, not of old Adam any more, but all of God in Chriſt, all of the new nature and Spirit, which is all of it righteous in the ſight of God. Now this is it all ſhould labour for and ſeek after, even the kingdom of God and his righteouſneſs, to find an entrance miniſtered to them into the everlaſting kingdom, and the righteouſneſs thereof, that they might really put off the old man with his affections and luſts, and put on the new man; the new man's nature, the new man's image, the new man's ſpirit, the new man's righteouſneſs, the new man's holineſs; that they might have the wedding garment on to be married to Chriſt in, and might be as a bride prepared for the bride-groom. Oh! it is precious for any one to feel his ſoul in this ſtate! And who would not travel and wreſtle, and ſtrive and watch, and pray and wait, that he might be thus fitted by the Spirit of the Lord for his Son Jeſus Chriſt? For, friends, there is a coming under grace,

under grace's wing, and out of ſhame and confuſion becauſe of ſin, into the glory which is in the pure image; and there is a being changed from grace to grace, and from glory to glory, by the Spirit and power of the Lord. Oh! that ſuch as take upon them the profeſſion of Chriſtianity, might feel the power, and wait upon the power, and know what it is to believe in the power, and live in the power; for without this, the oppreſſed ſtate of Chriſtianity is but dead, and dry, and cold, not having the true living ſap and warmth in it. There are great deceits in the world about theſe things, but he that knoweth the truth as it is in Jeſus, who was viſited by the power, gathered to the power, and abides in the power, he hath that with him which anoints his eye and heart, and ſtrengthens them againſt the moſt ſubtile devices and deceits of the transforming ſpirit. But whoever he be that profeſſeth Chriſtianity, and is not here, he is not ſafe, but the enemy hath ways of bewitching and deluding him, which he hath not wherewith effectually to withſtand and avoid.

Now having nakedly expreſſed theſe things unto you, as they are in my heart, there is a queſtion lies before me to propound to you, which deſerves your ſerious conſideration of, and ability to anſwer in the ſight of the Lord, which is this:

Queſt. Do ye rightly, truly, and fully (as the Lord requireth of you) know, eſteem, and honour the Son? Do ye own him as God hath revealed him in the ſpirits of his children, ſince the apoſtaſy? Do ye feel him as an horn of ſalvation lifted up there? Do ye find and experience him revealed within by the Father, as the ſeed of the woman, bruiſing the head of the ſerpent? Oh! this is precious knowledge, and the right way of truly knowing him as he came from the Father, lived in obedience to him, ſuffered for the ſins of the whole world, aſcended again to the Father, and now ſits with him in glory! For, indeed, it is the chief thing, and that whereon the ſoul's reſt depends, to know and feel him near. Oh! that we were one here (I mean in the inward ſenſe and acknowledgment of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt), and we ſhould ſoon be one in the other alſo!

For we, who are reproachfully by many called QUAKERS, are (for the moſt part) a people who have much and long ſought after the Lord, and after the experimental knowledge of thoſe truths, which are teſtified of and related in the holy ſcriptures. We ſought not after a new Chriſt, or a new Spirit, or new doctrines concerning Chriſt or his Spirit; but to know Chriſt, ſo as to receive life from him, and to live to him in the life and ſpirit received from him; this hath been the ſingle aim and deſire of our ſouls. And if men could with patience conſider what we hold forth, and wait till God open their underſtandings, they would not lay ſuch blame upon us as they do in many reſpects, but find that we reverence the ſcriptures, believing and holding concerning the things of God according as is there expreſſed, from a true underſtanding received from the Lord, and in the true light and guidance of his Spirit. There is another queſtion ſprings in my heart

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unto you, I beſeech you conſider of it ſeriouſly, perhaps there may be a bleſſing to you in it.

Queſt. Do ye rightly and weightily conſider and embrace that counſel of Chriſt, *Matt.* vi. 33. *Seek ye firſt the kingdom of God, and his righteouſneſs?* Do ye mind what Chriſt likens the kingdom to? Even a grain of muſtard-ſeed, a pearl hid in a field, a little leaven, a loſt piece of ſilver, &c. Do ye know, and are ye acquainted with that little thing which is like unto theſe? And do ye really and rightly ſeek after it? Do ye ſeek it where it is to be found? Do ye know the place where it is hid? And do ye take the right way to buy and purchaſe it? How is that? Why not by outward obſervation, ſaith Chriſt, but by inward ſweeping the houſe; by keeping the eye upon it, and ſweeping out the rubbiſh that covers it, this is the way to find it, purchaſe and poſſeſs it. Oh! that ye could all learn thus, and be thus exerciſed by the Spirit of the Lord daily. Surely they that thus ſeek ſhall find, and they that thus aſk ſhall have, and they that thus knock, to them the everlaſting kingdom ſhall be opened.

For mark the difference between the ſtate of the law and goſpel. The law was a ſhadow of good things to come. The goſpel is a ſtate of enjoyment of the good things ſhadowed out under the law. The law was a type of the kingdom, of the ſpiritual kingdom of Chriſt, which is ſet up under the goſpel. In John's day the kingdom was at hand; but in the day of Chriſt's power the kingdom is come. Under the law there was a tabernacle pitched by man; but under the goſpel the true tabernacle and temple is witneſſed, which God pitcheth and not man; and the holy, ſpiritual, heavenly ſacrifices, and the living covenant, whereof Chriſt is the mediator, and the law written in the heart, and the Spirit of the Lord put within, ſo that his preſence is as really witneſſed inwardly, in that which is truly his tabernacle and temple now, as ever it was witneſſed outwardly, in his outward tabernacle and temple under the law. Oh! that Chriſtians might not have the name only, but might be in the life and in the power, wherein theſe things are felt and experienced; for indeed the wonders of the Lord are ſeen in his temple, and his name is praiſed there, Selah. There he breaks the ſhield and the bow, the ſpear and the battle, Selah. There the enemy is overcome; the holy victory that bringeth him under, iſſueth out thence, Selah. There the well is opened, and the Philiſtine nature hath power to ſtop it no more, Selah. There the treaſury of life and wiſdom, and the riches of God's goodneſs are made manifeſt for ever.

Truly, friends, I have not loſt any thing that ever I had, or acknowledged of God in the days of my former profeſſion, by believing in the light which God hath now revealed in me, but have it ſtill with me, and in greater clearneſs and plainneſs, and fuller demonſtration than I then had it; but that of the fleſh which mixed with it, and hindered it from being rightly ſerviceable to the Lord, and fully comfortable to me, that the Lord hath been removing by his ſearching light, and by the demonſtration of his Spirit

and power. And if at length, after all my deep and long miſery, the Lord hath given me to meet with and enjoy that which is truly excellent (among thoſe whom men deſpiſe) I could heartily wiſh for you, that ye alſo might meet with and enjoy the ſame, without paſſing through that miſery and bitter anguiſh and diſtreſs of ſpirit, through which the Lord led me thereto. The Lord preſerve his people, by the arm of his mighty power, which he hath ſtretched out for them, and whereby he hath gathered them to himſelf. And thoſe which are not yet of this fold, oh! that it would pleaſe him to ſeek them out, and bring them home alſo; that the Lord may be one, and his name one amongſt us, and that that which divideth and ſcattereth from the living truth, might be ſcattered and brought to nought every where, in all who would be one, and deſire to ſerve God (with one conſent) in that which is true and pure, *Amen.*

A

REPLY

TO AN

ANSWER

OF

SOME QUERIES,

Given forth by me, J. P.

Concerning the

GOSPEL-BAPTISM;

WITH

ANSWERS to ſome other QUERIES Returned, in a PAPER ſubſcribed, N. B.

A REPLY TO AN ANSWER of ſome QUERIES, &c.

Query 1. *WHICH is the goſpel-baptiſm, or of what kind is the baptiſm in the goſpel-ſtate? Is it outward or inward? Is it the figure of the inward baptiſm, or the inward baptiſm itſelf?*

N. B's. Anſwer is, *It is a ſtooping to God's law.*

Reply, This is a very improper anſwer, and not all to the thing in hand; for the query was not concerning the ſtooping or ſubjecting to baptiſm, but what the baptiſm is, which is to be ſtooped and ſubjected to, whether that be an inward or outward baptiſm? Whether it be a figure of the holy and heavenly baptiſm of the goſpel, or the holy and heavenly baptiſm itſelf? So that, in theſe words, there is no anſwer at all returned to the query, but rather the aſſerting of another thing, which the query did not mention, altogether improper in this place; for the query tends to determine what the baptiſm itſelf is, and when that is once determined, about ſtooping and ſubjecting to it, there will be no queſtion I hope between us.

Now to explain what this law of God is, which is to be ſtooped to, he ſaith, *It is the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt*; quoting to prove it, *Rom.* viii. 2. *Matt.* xxviii. 18, 19. *Mark* xvi. 16.

Reply, That baptiſm, water-baptiſm (as he afterwards expreſſeth it in his anſwer to this query), is the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus, I never read in ſcripture. Nor doth it effect in the heart what the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus doth, which the apoſtle ſaith, made him free from the law of ſin and death; and it hath virtue and power in its nature over the law of ſin and death, which water-baptiſm hath not. The law of ſin and death is of an inward and ſpiritual nature; and the law of the Spirit of life alſo is of an inward and ſpiritual nature, ſtronger than the law of ſin and death,

death, and is able to make free from the law of sin and death inwardly. But water-baptism is an outward thing, an elementary thing, not able to reach the law of sin and death, nor to make free from it. I beseech you consider, ye who look upon this to be a command and ordinance of our Lord Christ, are ye, or are they, who are outwardly baptized with water, made free from the law of sin and death thereby? Nay, Paul himself, who was by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made free from the law of sin and death, yet was not made free so by outward baptism. For if he was outwardly baptized (as I am ready to believe he was, it being usual at that time) it was when *Ananias* came to him, and when the scales fell from his eyes, and he received sight, *Acts* ix. 18. But he was not then made free from the law of sin and death; for afterward, in his inward and spiritual exercise and holy travail, he found and complained of a law in his members, warring against the law of his mind, and bringing him into captivity to the law of sin in his members, *Rom.* vii. 23. This was not a state of freedom from the law of sin; for with his flesh he still served it, while in this state. But when by the Spirit the flesh was crucified, when the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus prevailed over the law of sin and death in his members, then he was no longer under Satan's captivity by sin, but a delivered man, made free therefrom, by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. Then he knew the truth, and the power and virtue of the truth manifested itself in him, and made him free, and he was free indeed; and said no more he could not do the good he would, nor forbear doing the evil he would not; but he was more than a conqueror over the evil, and set at liberty to work righteousness, and could do all things through Christ that strengthened him. Oh! that ye that plead so much for outward water, knew this law writ in your hearts, and the effectual power and virtue thereof freeing you from the law of sin and death, and then ye would no more attribute that to an outward thing (or to your obedience as to such an outward thing) which belongs to the Spirit and power of the Lord Jesus, and to the law of his life inwardly written in the heart.

Another scripture he brings to prove water-baptism to be the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, is *Matt.* xxviii. 19.

Reply, If it were granted, that Christ did in that place command water-baptism, yet that would not prove it to be the law of the Spirit of life in him. The law of the Spirit of life in him is a deep thing (I beseech you do not mistake it), and hath mighty effects in the soul, which water-baptism never had, nor can have upon any. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath that virtue and power from God in its nature, which water-baptism is not capable of. The figures, the outward representations, have not a capacity to receive that from God, which the inward law and substance hath.

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But that outward baptizing with water is there commanded by Chriſt, is not at all manifeſt from that ſcripture, but rather the contrary, if it be well minded. For Chriſt ſaith, all power was given him in heaven and earth, and bids them go and baptize. Doth he ſay with water? Nay; doth he not ſay into the name of the Father, Son, and Spirit? So that now, when the goſpel is preached in the Spirit and power of God, and his Spirit and power reacheth to our hearts, we are by that Spirit and power both taught and baptized inwardly, gathered into the name of the Father, Son, and Spirit, and baptized into their name. And he that doth this in the heart, teacheth the heart to call this the goſpel-baptiſm; and to call that which came forth in the hands of the fore-runner, the type or figure of this, the repreſentation of this, the ſhadow of the goſpel-baptiſm, but not the goſpel-baptiſm itſelf. Indeed we dare not call John's baptiſm, or water-baptiſm, the goſpel-baptiſm, or Chriſt's baptiſm; the Lord who hath manifeſted things to us, and taught us to put a difference between things that really differ, would judge and condemn us for ſo doing.

Mark further, Chriſt, who ſaith, *All power in heaven and earth is given me*, and therefore bid them go teach and baptize, yet withal bid them wait for the ſame Spirit and power which was given him, *Acts* i. 4.—8. And then having his Spirit and power, wherewith he inwardly taught and baptized, might they not be able therewith to reach the heart and conſcience, and ſpiritually both to teach and baptize, as inſtruments in God's hand, in the ſpringings of his life and power in them?

Now to manifeſt this further; for I feel the Lord opening my heart in this thing, and I hope it is for your ſakes (Oh! ye miſtaken ones in this weighty buſineſs!), that the Lord may explain things of this nature to you, and do you good thereby. To whom was this commiſſion or command, in the authority and power of God's Spirit given, to go and teach all nations, baptizing them into the name, *&c.*? Was it not eſpecially given to the apoſtles, who were eſpecially gifted thereunto? And was not Paul one; yea, one of the chief, made ſo by God our Father, and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt? And he being in a ſpecial manner ſent to the Gentiles, or Heathen nations (for the Jews were but one nation), did not this commiſſion extend to him, and this command lie upon him? Now if this command did extend to inward, ſpiritual, goſpel-baptizing, with the Spirit and power of the Lord Jeſus, he had it as full as any of them; but if it be underſtood of water-baptiſm, we do not find that he had any ſuch commiſſion, but rather otherwiſe. Read his commiſſion, *Acts* xxvi. 18. is there any thing of water-baptiſm in it? There is remiſſion of ſins, which depends upon believing and turning to God, in his illuminating Spirit and power, but nothing of water-baptiſm. And mark, it is God that opens mens eyes, and it is God that opens their hearts, and inwardly turns them from darkneſs to light, and Satan's power to God; yet Paul was ſent by the Lord to do this. And is it an harder matter inwardly to baptize, than to do this? So that it

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is not Paul, but the Lord that opens the eyes, and turns men; yet the Lord ſent Paul to do it, and ſurely the Lord enabled him, by his Spirit and power, to do what he ſent him to do.

Object. *But though it is not here particularly expreſſed, yet it may be implied or intended. Or if this commiſſion did not reach to him, the former apoſtolic commiſſion would, he being made ſo extraordinary an apoſtle. Or at leaſt it would reach him as a teaching diſciple; for he that hath authority to teach the nations, hath alſo authority to baptize them.*

Anſw. No, Paul neither by this commiſſion, nor by the apoſtolic commiſſion, nor by his diſcipleſhip, had any authority or miſſion from God to baptize, if ye take baptiſm in this place for baptizing with outward water, as he himſelf expreſly ſaith, *Chriſt ſent me not to baptize* (ſpeaking of water-baptiſm), *but to preach the goſpel*, 1 Cor. i. 17. Nay, he thanks God that he baptized none of them, to his remembrance, but Criſpus, Gaius, and the houſhold of Stephanus, *ver.* 14. 16. Now if he had looked upon water-baptiſm as Chriſt's ordinance, and as the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus, would he thank God he had obeyed it no more?

Object. *But he gives the reaſon of that, leſt any ſhould ſay he had baptized in his own name.*

Anſw. Why, perſons might ſay he preached in his own name, yet that would not have excuſed him from preaching. No more would mens ſaying he baptized in his own name, excuſe him from baptizing, if water-baptiſm had been Chriſt's command and ordinance.

The laſt place he brings to prove water-baptiſm to be the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus, is *Mark* xvi. 16. *He that believeth, and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved; but he that believeth not, ſhall be damned.*

Reply, This ſheweth the neceſſity of the goſpel-baptiſm, but this doth not expreſs which the goſpel-baptiſm is, whether an inward or outward waſhing. We know, having been taught by the Lord, that there is no ſalvation without inward waſhing, which is alſo very demonſtrable to others; but God forbid that all ſhould be damned, that are not baptized with outward water.

He ſaith, *This law was confirmed by them that had the Spirit-baptiſm, being commanded to be obeyed by them that had the Spirit*, Acts x. 47, 48.

Reply, That Peter did command perſons to be baptized with water, and that John's baptiſm, or water-baptiſm, was made uſe of in thoſe days, and that John had it from God, and that it was done in God's name, this is not denied; but that water-baptiſm was Chriſt's baptiſm, or the goſpel-baptiſm, this place doth not prove.

He ſaith further, *The kind of this baptiſm is water-baptiſm*, bringing *Mat.* iii. 16. and *Acts* viii. 38, 39. to prove it.

Reply, Matt. iii. 16. only proves that Chriſt was baptized with water, but doth not prove that water-baptiſm is the goſpel-baptiſm. If I could prove by ſcripture expreſly, that Chriſt was circumciſed, yet that would not

prove that therefore that was to be the goſpel-circumciſion. So though it be manifeſt, that Chriſt was baptized by John, with his water-baptiſm, yet that doth not at all prove that John's water-baptiſm is Chriſt's goſpel-baptiſm. The end of John's baptizing with water was, that Chriſt might be made manifeſt, *John* i. 31. And when he is made manifeſt (when he who is the word, who is the life, is made manifeſt, 1 *John* i. 1, 2.), then men muſt come to him, to be baptized by him with his baptiſm, which is with the Holy Ghoſt, and with fire, *Matt.* iii. 11. or with the Spirit of judgement and burning, *Iſa.* iv. 4.

That other place of *Acts* viii. 38, 39. doth not at all prove that water-baptiſm is the goſpel-baptiſm, but only that Philip did baptize the Eunuch with water, which is not a thing denied by us. Yea, what if I ſhould grant, that the Lord did honour it as much as any ſhadow, or more than other ſhadows, by letting it have a longer time, and otherwiſe; yet that will not prove it to be Chriſt's baptiſm, or a goſpel-ordinance. And if men do take it up in tenderneſs of ſpirit, bowing to the Lord, it is ſo much the better; yet it is not eaſy to believe that all do ſo; and thoſe that do ſo, may err in their judgments, notwithſtanding; though I am perſuaded, the Lord is tender to perſons that do things in tenderneſs of heart to him, notwithſtanding ſome error or miſtake in their judgments.

Query 2. *What is it that is to be waſhed in the goſpel-ſtate? Is it the outward or inward man? And what is the inward man to be waſhed with?*

Anſw. His anſwer is, it is the body, the whole man or woman to go into the water, in the name of the Father, Son, and Spirit; ſo that the ſoul comes to be ſanctified by the word and Spirit. For the proof of which he quotes, *John* viii. 32. and *chap.* xv. 3.

Reply. That the whole body was to go into the water, according to John's baptiſm, is granted; but that this is the goſpel-baptiſm, or Chriſt's baptiſm, is denied by us. It is the inward Jew that is to be waſhed in the goſpel-ſtate, and is inward water, ſpiritual water, that he is to be waſhed with. I pray conſider that ſcripture ſeriouſly (and the Lord give you the true underſtanding thereof), *Zech.* xiii. 1. Doth not that ſcripture ſpeak of the goſpel-ſtate? What fountain is it that is opened in the goſpel-ſtate? Is it an outward fountain of outward waters, which is opened for ſin and for uncleanneſs, to waſh it away? The Lord knoweth of what nature ſin is, and with what water it is to be waſhed away, and therefore openeth that fountain in the houſe of David in the goſpel-ſtate, which is proper to waſh it away with. What is the houſe of David? Who is the Jew in the goſpel-ſtate? What is the tabernacle or houſe of David that is raiſed up then? What is the fountain that is opened there for ſin, and for uncleanneſs? Can ſin be waſhed away from any heart and conſcience, but by the water of this fountain? And is not the goſpel-baptiſm with this water? Do not thoſe that are waſhed with this water feel the true waſhing, and know it certainly, evidently, infallibly, in the demonſtration of God's Spirit, to be the true baptiſm;

baptiſm; not the figurative outward waſhing of the body, but the real inward waſhing of the ſoul? There is the waſhing of regeneration, *Tit.* iii. 5. which is with that which regenerates, which the water of the fountain of life and holineſs doth, which God opens in the heart, and waſheth the ſoul with, and cauſeth the ſoul to waſh in; but the outward water, which waſheth the outward body, hath no ſuch nature or virtue in it, nor ever was appointed by God to produce any ſuch effect. That the ſoul is ſanctified by the word and Spirit, is granted: but that the ſoul is not ſanctified by the word and Spirit, unleſs the body is waſhed with outward water, that is denied; and the ſcriptures afore-mentioned by him, of *John* viii. 32. and *chap.* xv. 3. do not at all prove any ſuch thing. Now the goſpel-obedience is to Chriſt's baptiſm, not to John's baptiſm. And the ſoul that is ſubject to Chriſt's baptiſm, doth not live in diſobedience, for not taking up John's baptiſm; which God doth not allow him to do; but in the goſpel-ſtate, every one is to hear the Son, the Shepherd of the ſoul, and follow him the ſubſtance, and not Moſes's circumciſion or John's baptiſm.

Query 3. *What is waſhed away by the goſpel-baptiſm? Is it the filth of the outward body or fleſh? Or the filth of the ſoul? And with what water is the filth of the ſoul to be waſhed away?*

Anſw. Sin is waſhed away by the goſpel-baptiſm: for the proof whereof he quotes, *Acts* xxii. 16. *Rom.* vi. 17, 18.

Reply, Thus far we agree, that ſin is waſhed away by the goſpel-baptiſm; but what that baptiſm is which waſheth away ſin, herein we greatly differ. He affirmeth it to be outward water, and the waſhing of the outward man therewith. I affirm it to be inward water, from the inward holy fountain which God opens in the houſe of David, whereby the ſoul and conſcience is waſhed from ſin, and from uncleanneſs. That place of *Acts* xxii. 16. ſpeaks of Paul's being baptized, and waſhing away his ſins; but doth not ſay, that outward waſhing the body with outward water is the waſhing away of ſins; but bids him waſh away his ſins, calling on the name of the Lord. And thus the waſhing away of ſins is at this day experienced. The Lord manifeſts ſin, turns the mind againſt it, and cauſeth a cry to the Lord, and then the Lord opens the fountain, cauſeth the pure water to flow, which the ſoul is waſhed with; and ſo far as it is waſhed therewith, it is clean in the ſight of God, and hath the inward ſenſe of its cleanneſs from the Lord. Yet that there was a figurative waſhing away of ſins by John's baptiſm, I do not deny; for it was unto repentance, and they thereby profeſſed repentance, and were to *bring forth fruits meet for repentance*, Matt. iii. 8. Nor doth that other place (*Rom.* vi. 17, 18.) prove, that waſhing the body with outward water waſheth away ſin, or maketh free from ſin; but that which makes free from ſin, is the power, virtue, and life of truth felt in the heart, waſhing and cleanſing it. It is receiving the truth in the love of it, and being moulded into the nature of it, believing it in the evidence and demonſtration of God's Spirit, and obeying it in the obedience of the new

nature, mind, and Spirit. And the anſwer of a good conſcience comes from the inward baptiſm, from the waſhing which the apoſtle calls ἀντίτυπον the anti-type, 1 *Peter* iii. 21. which baptiſm is not the waſhing away the filth of the fleſh or body; but an inward baptiſm, which ſo waſheth inwardly, that the anſwer of a good conſcience is preſently felt, in the ſight and preſence of God. And then the ſoul knows what water it was waſhed with, which was able to produce, and did produce this effect.

He ſaith, *And thus it appears; Firſt it takes off diſobedience.*

Reply, What is it takes off diſobedience? The truth as it is in Jeſus, the life and power of truth, felt and working in the heart, deſtroys the diſobedient nature, and takes away the diſobedience thereof; but outward waſhing of the body doth not, though men may apprehend there is an outward command for it, and judge they do it in obedience to that outward command. But obedience is from true underſtanding of the mind and will of God, and from that holy light of his Spirit wherein the holy underſtanding is given. And in this obedience the Lord's juſtification is witneſſed; which is not witneſſed in the other; I mean in that which men call obedience to that which they account a literal command, according to their conceivings and apprehenſions.

Secondly, *As it leads perſons unto Chriſt; for which he quotes*, Rom. vi. 2, 3. Gal. iii. 27.

Reply, That which leads unto Chriſt, and into the truth as it is in him, the children of the new covenant know, who are drawn by the Father, and are taught and learn of him to come to the Son, *John* vi. 44, 45. And how can we give that honour to John's baptiſm, or outward waſhing the body, which belongs to the Father, and his powerful Spirit? To be baptized into Chriſt is a great thing. To be buried with Chriſt by baptiſm into death, is a precious ſtate, and effected by the inward work of the Spirit in the heart, working againſt ſin, working the mind out of ſin, into the nature, Spirit, and life of Chriſt. And the being baptized into Chriſt, is the real putting on Chriſt. It is the effect of knowing the truth as it is in Jeſus, which cauſeth the putting off of the old man, and the renewing in the Spirit of the mind, and putting on the new, *Epheſ.* iv. 22, 23, 24. But John's baptiſm, or the waſhing the body with outward water, doth none of theſe things, but is only a type or repreſentation of what is done in and by the inward baptiſm.

He adds further, *And ſo the ſoul receives Chriſt in his prophetical and prieſtly office; ſo by Chriſt we are delivered from all filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit, that we may perfect holineſs in the fear of God.*

Reply, The kingdom of Chriſt is ſpiritual, the kingdom of Chriſt is within, and he that would truly know him as he is king, prophet, and prieſt, muſt hear his knocks, know his voice, open to him, and let him in, and then he will manifeſt himſelf there, and the ſoul ſhall know what he is, even his king, prieſt, and prophet, and feel him exerciſing all theſe holy offices,

offices, in the authority and power of his Father, in the heart. This is precious knowledge indeed. Yea, he ſhall know him with his fan in his hand, thoroughly purging his floor from all unbelief, from all diſobedience, from all chaffineſs and earthlineſs; yea, from all filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit; for his fan turns againſt them all, and his Spirit of judgment and burning flames inwardly againſt them all; and as they are conſumed and burnt up, the pure fear of the Lord is increaſed in the heart, wherein holineſs is begun, and at length perfected, by the thorough circumciſion and baptiſm of the Spirit. But the Corinthians were not cleanſed from all filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit by water-baptiſm, but were afterwards exhotred by Paul to do it.

Query 4. *What water is it that the inward Iſrael ſhall be ſprinkled with, that they may be clean? Is it not inward water, ſpiritual water? And can any be clean or baptized in the ſight of God, that are not baptized with this water, wherewith God ſprinkleth and waſheth his ſpiritual and inward Iſrael?*

Anſw. Baptiſm is not ſprinkling, nor ſo rendered by the Spirit, but baptize; baptize is to dip or put into the water.

Reply, When God ſprinkleth his inward Iſrael, with the water which he hath promiſed to ſprinkle with, he doth ſufficiently cleanſe them; for whom the Lord ſprinkleth with this water, they are cleanſed thereby, *Ezek.* xxxvi. 25. And this relates to the goſpel-ſtate; for a new heart is immediately promiſed, *ver.* 26. which is the promiſe of the goſpel-covenant. And the blood of ſprinkling in the new-covenant doth ſufficiently waſh and cleanſe, *Heb.* xii. 24. *Rev.* i. 5. ſprinkling and dipping are but figures; but they are both comprehended in the ſubſtance, which we ſhould wait inwardly to feel and experience. The water which Chriſt ſpeaks of, *John* iii. 5. (which place he quotes) is not outward, but of the ſame nature with the Spirit, whereof the ſoul is waſhed and born again, and riſeth up in the new life with Chriſt.

He ſaith, *The inward fits for the outward.*

Reply, It is true, John's baptiſm did require inward qualifications (in which reſpect it went beyond circumciſion), and ſo where thoſe qualifications were found, who could forbid water? But Chriſt's baptiſm, the baptiſm with Spirit and fire to purify the mind and burn up the droſs, is of an higher miniſtration, and a far more glorious baptiſm than that, *Matt.* iii. 11. *He ſhall baptize you: you*, what *you? You* whom I have baptized with water. So that thoſe whom he had baptized to repentance, he tells of another baptiſm, a more glorious baptiſm than his, which happy are they that wait for, and feel accompliſhed in them.

Query 5. *What is the goſpel-circumciſion? Is it not an inward and ſpiritual circumciſion? and is not the circumciſing knife, wherewith the inward Iſrael is circumciſed, inward and ſpiritual? And is not the goſpel-baptiſm, wherewith the inward Iſrael is waſhed, as inward and ſpiritual as the goſpel-circumciſion?*

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Is not this circumciſion and waſhing of the ſame nature, and effected without outward hands?

Anſw. It is inward, ſpiritual, heavenly, that which God works by the knife of his word, *Heb.* iv. 12. *Heſ.* vi. 5.

Reply, This is true; we whom God hath called, quickened, enlightened, circumciſed, and baptized, experience it ſo; and happy is he, if he experience it ſo alſo. For the word is living, and makes alive; the word is quick and powerful, ſharper than any two-edged ſword, and it doth inwardly pierce to the dividing aſunder of the ſoul and ſpirit (Oh! this is a bleſſed experience inwardly, where-ever it is felt!), and of the joints and marrow, and is a diſcerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And this word came to the prophets, and did hew through the prophets, and God's judgements by this word were as a light that went forth. This word is the word of life, and the life is manifeſted in it, as the apoſtles knew in their day, 1 *John* i. 2. and as God's gathered ones know in this day.

But let him take heed, leſt he put the letter, or outward deſcriptions of heavenly things, for the word; for the kingdom or goſpel-ſtate ſtands not in ſuch kind of words, but in power, 1 *Cor.* iv. 20. and the apoſtles were made able miniſters of the New-Teſtament, not of the letter, but of the Spirit; for the letter killeth, but the Spirit miniſtereth life, 2 *Cor.* iii. 6. So we diſtinguiſh the word of life (the quick piercing word that giveth life), from the words which came from it, *Acts* v. 20. which words are alſo living, as they come from the life; otherwiſe, in the mouth, underſtanding, or comprehenſion of him who is not living (nor in a true ſenſe and underſtanding of them), they are not life. So men ſhould not ſtrive to comprehend things with that outward underſtanding, which can never attain thereto, but wait to receive the underſtanding from God, whereby they may know him that is true, and his goſpel-ordinance, and the holy laws of his kingdom, and be found in the obedience thereof to him in the Spirit.

Now granting the goſpel-circumciſion to be inward and ſpiritual, how can he make the goſpel-baptiſm to be of a nature inferior to it, even outward and carnal, *viz.* a waſhing with the elementary water of this creation, and not with the inwardly ſanctifying and cleanſing water of life, which God ſprinkleth upon his ſpiritual Iſrael, and alſo plunges their ſouls into? And conſider ſeriouſly, whether the apoſtle, ſpeaking both of circumciſion and baptiſm, *Col.* ii. 11, 12. did intend either of them as to the outward, and not rather both of them as to the inward, wherein the true inward ſpiritual circumciſing, and alſo the true inward baptizing, is witneſſed, and both without hands; for neither circumciſion nor uncircumciſion avails (no more doth outward waſhing the body, or not waſhing it avail) but a new creature; the putting off of the body of the ſins of the fleſh by the circumciſion and baptiſm of Chriſt, this avails, and is of great eſteem with God.

Query

Query 6. *What is the one baptism of the spiritual Israel, without which there is no salvation? Can there be any salvation without the inward washing of the soul? May there not be salvation without the outward washing of the body?*

Answ. That which Christ Jesus commanded; for there is but one baptism commanded, and that leads us to Christ and God.

Reply, Was not John's baptism commanded, which was an outward washing? And is not the inward washing commanded also? Was not Israel commanded to circumcise their hearts, and was not that an inward circumcision? And were they not also commanded to wash their hearts from wickedness, and was not that an inward washing or baptism? How could they do either of these? Why, did not Moses direct them to the word nigh in their mouth and heart, whereby both these might be done? And can either of these be done in any heart, but by the operation of this word of life inwardly in the heart? We know, *There is no other name under heaven*, nor way *to be saved, but Christ* the word of life, and light of men. But they that are saved by him, must know him as a living stone within, and come from all else in their hearts to him (as to a precious foundation-stone of life), and be new-created by him, circumcised and baptized into him, and so walk in him, the new and living way, and serve God his Father, in the newness of the Spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter; which happy are they that understand what it is, and are found in this obedience to the Lord, and in thus worshipping him in his Spirit and truth, which is the gospel-service and worship. For men may easily mistake about the letter; but the new birth doth not mistake concerning the Spirit, nor the true sheep concerning the voice of Christ.

Query 7. *How are men buried with Christ by baptism into death? Is it not an inward spiritual death, that men are thus buried with Christ into? And is it not effected by an inward spiritual baptism?*

Answ. By water-baptism; for Christ was buried, so are we. Christ was buried by baptism in the water, so are we.

Reply, Christ was outwardly circumcised; so are we also circumcised; not outwardly, as Christ was. Christ was not circumcised to effect any thing upon him (for he needed it not), but for our sakes. And he was baptized for our sakes also, that we also might be circumcised, and baptized with the circumcision and baptism which we need, which is the circumcising and baptizing of our souls, and not the circumcising or washing of our bodies.

He adds, *Christ did it to fulfil all righteousness; we to fulfil the righteous law and will of God, we thereby entering into covenant with God, whereby we set to his seal* (I suppose he means, *our seal*) *that he is true.*

Reply, It remains yet to be proved, that baptizing with water is God's law and will in the gospel-state. I am sure there are those that are taught otherwise by him that teacheth all his children, from the least to the greatest,

greateſt, in the new covenant? And the new covenant is an inward covenant; which they that hear God's voice therein, and have his law written in their hearts, and obey it, are led by him more and more into. Now the new covenant is not made with every thirſty one after the living waters, but only ſuch as come to Chriſt in the drawings and teachings of his Father; and when they are come to Chriſt, incline their ears, and hearken diligently to him, *Iſa.* lv. 1, 2, 3. ſuch aſſuredly know and enjoy the ſure mercies of David, having God to be their Shepherd to ſpread their table for them; and they eat that which is good, and are ſatisfied with the fat things of his houſe, and ſo can ſet to their ſeal that God is true and faithful, who hath not only promiſed ſuch things, but is daily fulfilling and making them good in and to their ſouls.

Query 8. *What is that baptiſm, from whence there certainly and conſtantly ariſeth the anſwer of a good conſcience towards God? Doth not this always ariſe from the inward baptiſm, from the waſhing away of that which defileth the conſcience? Is not then the conſcience thereby made good and holy in the ſight of God? And doth it not then anſwer the holy will, law, and Spirit, of the holy and good God?*

Anſw. The baptiſm of water; being that which Chriſt commanded.

Reply, Water-baptiſm, or outward waſhing of the body, cannot make the conſcience good; for a man may do that upon a miſtake, through error of judgment, and go unchanged into it, and come unchanged out of it. But the inward circumciſion, and inward baptiſm, doth really cut off and waſh away the ſin and filth of the conſcience, and ſo make it good; and then the good conſcience doth anſwer to God, in what he teacheth and requireth. But that water-baptiſm was commanded by Chriſt, is ſtill denied on our part, and unproved on his.

He ſaith, *A clear conſcience ariſeth from a true conformity to the law of God.*

Reply, This is very true. But what is the law of God in the new covenant, but what he writes in the heart? God is the teacher of his people in the new covenant; and what he teacheth and requireth of them by his Spirit, is their law. Chriſt is their law-giver, and he gives forth his law of life, from his Spirit of life, to thoſe that wait for it, *Iſa.* xlii. 2. And he likewiſe opens the ſcriptures, and ſhews what God taught and required of former ages, and of this preſent age. He ſhews what the ſhadows of the law were, and what the miniſtration of the prophets and John was, and what the miniſtration of the Son is; who is faithful in all his houſe to every one there, as a Son, to give the law of the Spirit of life to them; even as Moſes the ſervant was to give, the outward law to thoſe of his houſe. So that it is not ſufficient to read a ſcripture, or ſcriptures, and ſay this was commanded, and this was practiſed of old; but to wait to know how it was commanded, and how practiſed, and of what nature it was, whether of the everlaſting nature of the kingdom, which is to remain; or of an outward,

elementary

elementary nature, which might be ſhaken and paſs away. For it was the will of God, that all ſuch things ſhould be ſhaken and paſs away, that the kingdom itſelf alone, which cannot be ſhaken, might remain, *Heb.* xii. 27.

Concluſion. *Oh! that people knew and experienced the baptiſm which is the ſubſtance, and then they would not idolize that baptiſm, or outward waſhing, which in its nature can be no more than a ſign, ſignification, or repreſentation of that which is the ſubſtance!*

Anſw. Our baptiſm, which is the goſpel-baptiſm, being baptized into Chriſt, is that which brings us to the ſubſtance, Chriſt Jeſus our Lord, the ſubſtance of all things. So that ſigns or ſignifications are nothing to us, but Chriſt is all to our ſouls.

Reply, That water-baptiſm is the goſpel-baptiſm, can never be proved by you, it being neither of the nature of the goſpel, nor commanded by Chriſt the law-giver in the goſpel. And that this waſhing with outward water is the baptizing into Chriſt, is a very low and dark apprehenſion, far from truth, and the right underſtanding of the ſcriptures, and the experience of thoſe who are baptized with Chriſt's baptiſm. And that which brings to Chriſt, is the Father, by his drawings; not outward baptizing, or waſhing the outward man with outward water; that is but a bodily exerciſe, and bodily exerciſes profit little, ſo far are they from bringing to Chriſt the ſubſtance. And as for what he ſaith concerning ſigns and ſignifications; oh! that it were ſo indeed, that they were nothing to you, but Chriſt were all to your ſouls! For if it were ſo indeed, could ye thus cry up a figure or ſhadow of the goſpel-baptiſm, and be ſo ignorant of the ſubſtance. Do the Jews know the inward circumciſion? Or do ye know the inward baptiſm, any more than the Jews knew the inward circumciſion? Read that ſcripture, *Rom.* ii. 28, 29. and the Lord apply it home to your ſouls; *He is not a Jew which is one outwardly, neither is that circumciſion which is outward in the fleſh; but he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumciſion is that of the heart in the Spirit, and not in the letter, whoſe praiſe is not of men, but of God.* Now may not the Spirit of God ſay in theſe our days (yea, of a truth the Spirit of our God doth ſay ſo, and many have heard his voice ſo ſpeaking), he is not a Chriſtian which is one outwardly, neither is that goſpel-baptiſm, which is outward on the fleſh; but he is a Chriſtian which is one inwardly, and the goſpel-baptiſm is that of the heart in the Spirit, not in the letter, whoſe praiſe is not of men, but of God. The Jews praiſed the outwardly circumciſed, and ye praiſe the outwardly baptized; but God praiſeth the inwardly circumciſed and waſhed. So that their juſtification and praiſe is of him, and they matter not the juſtification or praiſe of man.

He adds further, *Neither do we theſe things but to obey him and follow his footſteps that he went before us in, and ſo he is our leader and commander.*

Reply, Every practice of his he doth not lead or command his diſciples to follow him in. He was circumciſed outwardly; are we to take it up becauſe it was his footſtep? No more are we to take up the outward waſh-

ing, becauſe it was his footſtep. But we are to take up that circumciſion which cutteth off that which is evil from us, and crucifieth to the world; and we are alſo to take up that baptiſm which inwardly baptiſeth and effectually cleanſeth from ſin. Oh! how plain are theſe things, where the eye is ſingle, and the mind not blinded or prejudiced with its own conceivings and miſapprehenſions!

He adds yet, *So that we are not idolizing any thing, but following Chriſt in the way he went before us in.*

Reply, I wiſh from my heart ye were not idolizing John's baptiſm, or water-baptiſm, by ſetting it in the place of Chriſt's baptiſm, and attributing that to it which belongs to Chriſt's baptiſm, and not to it. To affirm that water-baptiſm is the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt, and that ſtooping to it is ſtooping to the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt, and that the ſoul cannot be ſanctified without going into the outward water; for till then it is in diſobedience, and charged as a tranſgreſſor; and the inward man cannot be waſhed while living in diſobedience, and that ſin is waſhed away by this outward water-baptiſm, and that this takes off diſobedience, and ſo is the anſwer of a good conſcience in obedience to God, and that it leads perſons into Chriſt, with more of this nature; what is this but the idolizing of an outward elementary creature and creaturely action, and an undervaluing of that water and blood which alone can do this? Now to term this idolizing is no reflecting on Chriſt; but on mens error of judgment, and their erroneous practices which enſue thereupon; much leſs is it blaſphemy, although Chriſt himſelf was accounted a blaſphemer for teſtifying the truth, by the profeſſors of that age; and ſuch a judgment may his followers meet with now, from the profeſſors of this age.

He ſaith further, *I know that the pretence of all this is the baptiſm of the Spirit.*

Reply, He is greatly miſtaken. It is not a *pretence*, but a feeling of the baptiſm of the Spirit, by the water of the fountain of life which God opens in the heart, and the being born of this water and of the Spirit. By this means we came to know the baptiſm which ſaves, and the Spirit's waſhing and regenerating us therewith; and if we ſhould give the honour of this baptiſm to the waſhing of the body with outward water, we ſhould ſin againſt the Lord, and be unfaithful in the teſtimony he hath given us to bear.

He ſaith, *Take notice that the baptiſm of the Spirit is a promiſe, not a duty.*

Reply, That it is a *promiſe* is granted; but it is alſo a *duty* to receive the promiſe, and to give up to be baptized by him. Now to open this a little; for I write in love and tender good-will, and in that which opens my heart. The Spirit of the Lord did ſtrive with the old world. What did he ſtrive for? Did he not ſtrive to reclaim them from ſin? To circumciſe them? To waſh them? God gave his good Spirit to the Jews to inſtruct them. To what end to inſtruct them, but that they might circumciſe the foreſkin

foreſkin of their hearts, and be no more ſtiff-necked; and that they might be inwardly waſhed in heart from their wickedneſs, and their vain thoughts might no longer lodge within them. So that the inward circumciſion and the inward baptiſm of the ſoul and conſcience (from whence is the anſwer of a good conſcience), was before either the outward circumciſion or outward baptiſm, and is the ſubſtance, whereof the other were but figures. The Spirit was not only promiſed in the time of the goſpel, but was alſo promiſed in the time of the law (though more abundantly promiſed to be poured forth in the goſpel days), *Prov.* i. 23. Now what doth it do when poured forth? Doth it not enlighten, quicken, lead, touch, waſh, or ſanctify, purge out the old leaven, and leaven with the new leaven of the kingdom? Here is true underſtanding and true experience. Oh! that ye might come to witneſs and partake of it! Do ye deſire to obey? Oh! that ye were taught of God to know Chriſt, as the Father reveals him inwardly, and to deny and put off all that is contrary unto him, that ye may be baptized into him, and be found in him, filled and cloathed with his righteous Spirit, life, and nature; in which righteous Spirit, life, and nature, the true circumciſion and the true baptiſm is witneſſed.

He ſaith, *The promiſe of the Spirit, John calls the baptiſm of the Spirit*, Matt. iii. 11.

Reply, Though the Spirit, when poured out according to the promiſe of the Father, did baptize ſeveral ways; yet that is not it which John there calls the baptiſm of the Spirit; but the baptiſm of the Spirit is the inward purging away of ſin and filth, by the Spirit and its fire, or by the Spirit of judgment and burning; which thoſe that were baptized by John were afterwards to expect and wait for, that with his fan their floor might be purged, their chaff burnt up, and the wheat gathered into the garner, *ver.* 12.

He ſaith again, *Take notice, that the being baptized with the Spirit, or having the Spirit, does not excuſe us of our being baptized in water, but rather fits us for it.*

Reply, If baptiſm with water were a command of Chriſt, being baptized with the Spirit, or having the Spirit, would not excuſe from it. But if baptizing with the Spirit be the goſpel-baptiſm, and that which was figured out or repreſented by John's baptiſm, then we are not to turn back from the ſubſtance to the figure, or from Chriſt's command to his diſciples, to God's command by John to his diſciples.

He quotes *Acts* viii. 29. compared with *ver.* 38, 39. *Where* (ſaith he) *we may ſee, that the Spirit was in the work of the adminiſtration of water-baptiſm, as it leads men to the truth of the goſpel, and therefore it is that the apoſtle ſaith*, that by one Spirit we are baptized into one body, 1 *Cor.* xii. 13.

Reply, God, from whom the law was, and the prophets, and John's preaching and baptiſm, did work in them all by his Spirit; and John's miniſtration

niſtration being the higheſt, God might pleaſe to work moſt therein. But that this is Chriſt's baptiſm, commanded by him in the goſpel, or the water thereof the water wherewith Chriſt waſheth the ſoul, or the water of regeneration whereby God regenerates, that we cannot but deny, being taught of God, and having experience of the contrary. Yea it is manifeſtly but a ſhadow of Chriſt's baptiſm, and not the baptiſm itſelf; not the baptiſm of his Spirit and fire, wherewith alone the ſoul can be inwardly purged, *Matt.* iii. 11. compared with *Iſa.* iv. 4.

But that water-baptiſm leads men into the truth of the goſpel, is his great miſtake. He had ſaid but a few lines before, *that it is the office and work of the Spirit of God to lead us into all truths of the goſpel*; let him ſtick to that, and wait to experience that, and not attribute that to a dead thing, which belongs to the living Spirit.

And whereas he interpreteth that ſcripture, 1 *Cor.* xii. 13. of outward viſible baptiſm with outward water, that is a very manifeſt miſapprehenſon. (I wiſh he did not ſo miſunderſtand and miſinterpret ſcriptures, for want of the right key which opens them). For all that are baptized with outward water (whether Jews or Gentiles, bond or free), are not baptized into one body; but all that are inwardly baptized by the one Spirit, are baptized into the one body, whereof Chriſt is head, and they all drink into one Spirit; in which Spirit they all have life to act in the body, and have a living ſenſe of their place and ſervice in the body, which they who only are baptized with water have not.

Thus far in way of Reply to his Anſwers to thoſe Queries, which did flow from me, as life and the love of God ſprang up in me, without any premeditation at all; which retain their truth, evidence and ſtrength, notwithſtanding all that he hath ſaid to invalidate or weaken them. Now follow his Queries returned to conſideration, which it is on my heart to return an Anſwer to, in the nakedneſs and plainneſs of truth, as the Lord hath pleaſed to open and give me the knowledge and experience of the things queried of.

Query 1. *Whether the baptiſm of the Spirit be not a promiſe, and the work of God to give it to his creatures, and the baptiſm of afflictions an imputation of wicked men; and but one baptiſm commanded by Chriſt as a duty to ſubmit unto, if not water-baptiſm, what is it then?*

Anſw. The baptiſm Chriſt commands his diſciples to ſubmit to, is his own baptiſm, the baptiſm of his Spirit. The true diſciples of Chriſt are inward Jews and inward Chriſtians, and they are to ſubmit to the inward circumciſion and baptiſm of Chriſt their Lord. They are to be waſhed inwardly with the water of that fountain, which God opens to the houſe of David, and to the inhabitants of Jeruſalem for ſin and for uncleanneſs, *Zech.* xiii. 1. Doth God ſet this open for the inward and ſpiritual Jews or Chriſtians?

Chriſtians? And is it not their duty to be waſhed or baptized inwardly with it? They are to be baptized with the Holy Ghoſt and with fire, *Matt.* iii. 11. Every diſciple ought to wait for, receive, and experience this baptiſm. They are to be waſhed with the Spirit of judgment and burning, and to have their corrupt blood purged away thereby, *Iſa.* iv. 4. They are inwardly to be baptized into the name of the Father, Son, and Spirit, that they may inwardly riſe up in the newneſs of the life, and of that living name, *Matt.* xxviii. 19. They are to be baptized into the one body, which is the ſpiritual body; and by ſpiritual baptiſm is the ſoul baptized into it (and not by that which is carnal), and ſo to come to Mount Sion, and the heavenly Jeruſalem, and enter into it; which the uncircumciſed and unclean cannot enter into, but they alone that know the truth as it is in Jeſus, and keep it, *Heb.* xii. 22. *Iſa.* lii. 1. and *chap.* xxvi. 2.

Query 2. *If but one baptiſm commanded, and men cannot baptize one another with the Spirit, and it is ſinful to afflict one another, what baptiſm is this one baptiſm?*

Anſw. God made his apoſtles (and makes thoſe whom he makes miniſters in the goſpel) able miniſters of the New Teſtament, not of the letter, but of the Spirit. And if the Lord make them able miniſters in his Spirit, what ſhould hinder them from miniſtering the ſpiritual baptiſm? The ſame Spirit that teacheth through them, is it not able to baptize thro' them? *Who is ſufficient for theſe things*, ſaith the apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* ii. 16.? Were they ſufficient to teach, but as God taught through them? And are they not ſufficient to baptize, as God baptizeth through them? How often have we found our ſouls taught and baptized by the water of life flowing from the ſpring of life through the holy miniſtry, which God hath mercifully raiſed up, and maketh uſe of, in theſe our days?

Query 3. *Whether it be not the work of God on the inner man, that brings the outward man to be baptized, and obey the commands of God?*

Anſw. It was the work of God on the inner man, when John's baptiſm was commanded by God, to bring men to John's baptiſm; and it is the work of God's Spirit in the heart, which brings men to diſcern and ſubject to Chriſt's baptiſm; for the baptiſm of Chriſt is not diſcerned by man's wiſdom, or by the reaſoning mind, but by the ſenſe of life in the heart.

Query 4. *Whether men can be truly ſanctified by faith and the Spirit, that are diſobedient to God, and live ſo?*

Anſw. No, they cannot. But true obedience requires true light and true underſtanding; for all are not obedient who judge themſelves ſo, but thoſe whom God judgeth ſo. The inward Jew is obedient to the inward baptiſm, which Chriſt hath appointed, and dareth not ſet up John's outward in its place.

Query 5. *Whether the Spirit of God doth not diſtinguiſh between ſprinkling of the Spirit and baptiſm.*

Anſw.

Anſw. They are both figurative expreſſions; but they tend to, and end in, one and the ſame thing in ſubſtance, which is inward cleanſing. *Sprinkling clean water upon the ſoul doth cleanſe it*, Ezek. xxxvi. 25. And dipping into, or being overwhelmed with, the water of life, in the pourings out of the Spirit upon the ſoul, doth cleanſe alſo. For there is a river, the ſtreams whereof do not only refreſh, but alſo cleanſe and carry away ſin and filth from the ſoul, as with a flood.

I pray conſider that place, *Iſa.* xliv. 3, 4, 5. When God, from the fountain of life, pours out water and floods upon him that is a-thirſt, do not theſe floods and water waſh him and nouriſh him alſo? Do not they waſh away that which hinders his ſpringing up and growth in the truth? And is not he hereby baptized into the name of the Lord? God is the God of Jacob, the Holy One of Iſrael. And doth not one that is waſhed, feeling that carried away by the floods and overflowings of the Spirit, inwardly feel, and preſently ſay in his heart, *I am the Lord's? And another ſurname himſelf by the name of Iſrael?* Now I am one of the ſeed of Jacob indeed, and of God's Iſrael, and that name belongs to me. I am inwardly waſhed from my former wicked and deceitful heart; that is gone, and a new heart and ſpirit of God's creating and forming is witneſſed by me, and God's Spirit teſtifies in me, and to me, *That I am an Iſraelite indeed, in whom is no guile.*

Query 6. *Whether the circumciſing knife be not the word of God, and the ſoul obeying of it be not a ſign the knife hath entered, and taken place on the ſoul of man?*

Anſw. It is true; the word of God, the quick, powerful, piercing word of life, the word which lives and abides for ever, and is a commandment of life in the heart, (*Deut.* xxx. 11, to 15. which is the commandment, law, or word of the new covenant, *chap.* xxix. 1. which is the word of faith, which the apoſtles preached, *Rom.* x. 8.) this word of God is the circumciſing knife, and the ſoul obeying of it cannot but be circumciſed by it.

But I am jealous with a godly jealouſy, leſt he miſtake and call ſomewhat elſe the word, and reckon his obedience to what he apprehends from the letter, to be obedience to the word; and if ſo he greatly deceives his own ſoul. And I have good reaſon thus to be jealous concerning him, becauſe I find him, in his anſwer to my firſt query, terming water-baptiſm the *Law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt*; which cannot but be ſtrange language to all that know the nature, virtue, life, and power of the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus.

Query 7. *Whether baptiſm doth not lead men into Chriſt, as obedience to the mind of God in Noah's time led him into the ark, that we may be ſaved by Chriſt, as Noah was by the ark?*

Anſw. It is the Father, by his drawings, that leads men to Chriſt, and Chriſt by his Spirit baptiſeth them into himſelf. He conforms thoſe to himſelf

himſelf that come to him, both in his death and reſurrection, by the Spirit and power of the Father.

Now it is this baptiſm, or the inward waſhing, which removeth that which deſtroys; and the ſoul that is ſubject to the miniſtration of Chriſt's Spirit, and gives up to be waſhed by him, is waſhed and made clean, and comes into the number of the ſaved; for feeling the power which ſaves, and experiencing the virtue and operation of it, he muſt needs be ſaved thereby.

Nor was it obedience in Noah's time which led him into the ark, but God's voice or ſpecial command to him, which he received in the faith (*By faith he prepared the ark*, Heb. xi. 7.), which faith produced obedience; ſo that it is faith in the mighty power of God which ſaves; which power works mightily in them that truly believe, mightily circumciſing, mightily baptizing, mightily burying with Chriſt, burying the ſoul into his death, and raiſing it up again in the newneſs of his life. So that here is a real inward work of faith, a real inward appearing and working of the power, and a real obedience to, and a going along with the power in its work, in the holy fear and trembling; and ſo the ſoul works out its ſalvation, by the power which works in it *both to will and to do according to God's good pleaſure*, Phil. ii. 12, 13. Eph. i. 19, 20.

Query 8. *Whether Chriſt was not buried in the water-baptiſm? We then being baptized, are we not buried with Chriſt by baptiſm?*

Anſw. Chriſt was circumciſed with Moſes's circumciſion, and was alſo baptized with John's baptiſm, which was a dipping into, or burying in, the water; yet notwithſtanding this, he hath his own ſpiritual circumciſion and ſpiritual baptiſm, to be adminiſtered in the goſpel-diſpenſation unto his. And as all Moſes's diſciples were to be circumciſed with his circumciſion, and all John's diſciples to be baptized with his baptiſm unto repentance, ſo all Chriſt's diſciples are to be inwardly circumciſed and baptized with his inward circumciſion and baptiſm, which is the ſubſtance of both the other figures.

Now thoſe only that are thus circumciſed, are circumciſed by Chriſt, and thoſe only that are thus baptized, are buried with him by baptiſm into his death; which muſt be, before they can truly know a riſing with him in his life. May not a man or woman eaſily, from an apprehenſion in their underſtanding, go into the outward water, and riſe up again out of the water, and yet not know what it is to die with Chriſt, or riſe with Chriſt? But he that knoweth the inward baptiſm, witneſſeth and experienceth theſe things, being made a partaker with Chriſt, both in his death and reſurrection.

Query 9. *Whether obedience to the law of God doth not give a ſoul a good conſcience in the ſight of God, and diſobedience make the conſcience guilty? And whether ever the ſoul can be clear of ſin, while living in diſobedience to the law of God?*

Anſw.

Anſw. It is God's ſprinkling the ſoul, whether with the water of his holy fountain, or with the blood of the covenant, and his waſhing them therewith, which makes the conſcience good, *Ezek.* xxxvi. 25. *Zech.* xiii. 1. *Heb.* xii. 22. (Let it be conſidered ſeriouſly, whether outward water, or inward, be intended in that place? *Heb.* xii. 22. And when David ſaid, *He waſhed his hands in innocency*, Pſa. xxvi. 6. whether he did it with outward water)? This water, this blood, this ſprinkling, this waſhing, is received in obedience, and not in diſobedience. But what obedience is it received in? Is it received in obedience to Moſes's circumciſion or John's baptiſm? Or in obedience to Chriſt's circumciſion and baptiſm? And let him, and all of his perſuaſion, ſeriouſly weigh, whether ever the ſoul can be clear of ſin, while living in ignorance of, or diſobedience to, Chriſt's circumciſion and baptiſm, whereby alone ſin can be cut off from the heart, and waſhed away from the conſcience?

Query 10. *Whether to obey God, be not the way to meet with God, and to be baptized of God?*

Anſw. Obedience is better than ſacrifice, and to hearken, than the fat of rams. And to obey Chriſt's Spirit in the goſpel-diſpenſation, being inwardly circumciſed and waſhed by him, is far better than to be circumciſed with Moſes's circumciſion, or baptized with John's baptiſm. The day is dawned, and the ſhadows are fled away, and the obedience is not now to the ſhadowy ordinances of Moſes, or John the Baptiſt, but to the light of the day, which ſhines in the hearts of the children of the new covenant. And they only have the true knowledge of Chriſt, and the true obedience, who know the ſhinings of this light, and walk with God in the ſhinings thereof, 2 *Cor.* iv. 6. 1 *John* i. 7.

Query 11. *Whether man can idolize God's ordinances, in keeping, doing, loving, and living up to them?*

Anſw. They that ſet up Moſes's circumciſion, or John's baptiſm for Chriſt's (which are not outward, as Moſes's and John's, but inward and ſpiritual), they idolize them, and are found guilty of ſo doing, in the ſight of him who judgeth righteouſly. Is it not idolizing the ſhadow or figure, to ſet it up in the place of the ſubſtance?

Query 12. *Whether mens calling the keeping, doing, loving, and pleading for God's ordinances, idolatry, be not ſome of thoſe hard ſpeeches Jude ſpeaks of?* Jude xv.

Anſw. He ſtill all along takes the thing in queſtion for granted. We grant that Moſes's circumciſion was God's ordinance, and that John's baptiſm was God's ordinance; but that either of theſe is a goſpel-ordinance, that Moſes's circumciſion is the circumciſion of Chriſt, or John's water-baptiſm is the baptiſm of Chriſt, that we conſcientiouſly and groundedly deny; God's Spirit in the Scriptures putting a difference between them, as particularly between John's baptiſm and Chriſt's, *Matt.* iii. 11. So that as he greatly miſtakes the thing, ſo (through his miſtake) he lamentably wreſts

and

and miſapplies that ſcripture, *Jude* xv. And let him ſeriouſly conſider whether that ſcripture may not juſtly be applied to them? And whether they can poſſibly avoid the laſh of it without repentance, who deny and revile the inward appearance of Chriſt, by the light of his Spirit, in the hearts of his in this our day, and deny his inward circumciſion and baptiſm to be the goſpel-ordinance of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, ſetting up John's water-baptiſm in the ſtead thereof.

The laſt Query, *Whether it be not invading, and labouring to make void God's law and commands, when men ſo ſlight, contemn, deſpiſe, write, and do all they can to keep people from cloſing in with them, and make them afraid of them by their writing and preaching, as ſome do?*

Anſw. This Query implies a very deep wrong charge againſt the children and ſervants of God, for their obedience to God's Spirit. Oh! how will he anſwer this to God! Becauſe we own Chriſt's baptiſm, with the Holy Ghoſt and fire, and into the name of the Father, Son, and Spirit, with the water of the fountain which God opens for ſin and for uncleanneſs, and give teſtimony thereto in the requirings of God's Spirit, having learnt it of him, and experienced it from him, and having a neceſſity upon us in his name and authority (many times) to teſtify, That this is the goſpel-baptiſm of Chriſt our Lord, and that John's water-baptiſm is not the goſpel-baptiſm, but only a figure, repreſentation, or ſhadow thereof; therefore this man chargeth us with *invading, and labouring to make void God's law and commands, with ſlighting, contemning, deſpiſing*, &c. Are not theſe hard words, and a very unjuſt accuſation againſt God's choſen meſſengers and ſervants, and any whom he pleaſeth to make uſe of in this teſtimony? But the truth is, theſe hard words are not ſo much againſt us, as againſt him that ſends us with this teſtimony, and is no leſs than a fighting againſt him, who will be too hard for you all, and will gather people more and more from the outward water-baptiſm of John, to the inward baptiſm by his holy Spirit and fire, which happy are they that know and are baptized with.

He ſaith at the cloſe, *I have no end in this, but God's glory.*

Anſw. But he greatly miſtakes the way to glorify God; for to ſet up the ſhadow of a thing, inſtead of the thing itſelf, is not the way to glorify Chriſt, or the goſpel-diſpenſation. For Chriſt is the Son, who doth not come forth with Moſes's circumciſion, or John's baptiſm (who were both ſervants), but with the Spirit and power of his Father, wherewith he circumciſeth and baptizeth inwardly and ſpiritually. And to ſet up that which is outward in the ſtead of this, is both to diſhonour the Father and the Son.

The CONCLUSION.

NOW, for a cloſe, I ſhall open a little of the myſtery of CHRIST, and of his enlightening, quickening, circumciſing, and baptizing, from ſome ſcriptures, as the Lord hath pleaſed to open them in me and to me, and give me the inward ſenſe and experience of them.

John i. 1. and 3. *The word was in the beginning, which created all things*; and this word is alſo the beginning of the creation of God in the heart. *In this word was life, and the life was the light of men; and this light, which is life in the word, ſhineth in mens darkneſs*, which enlighteneth them that believe in it, and the life thereof quickeneth and giveth life to them that hear its voice, and believe in it; and both the light and life, or the word by its light and life, circumciſeth and baptizeth. Doth not the pure light cut off, chaſe away, waſh away darkneſs (wherein all ſin and uncleanneſs is comprehended) from the heart? Doth not the pure word of life, received in the faith, purify the heart?

Queſt. *But where is this word? Or how ſhall a man come at this word, or hear its voice or commandment, in the obedience whereof he is enlightened, quickened, circumciſed, and baptized?*

Anſw. It is not far off; *It is nigh thee*, ſaith Moſes. *Thou needeſt not go up to heaven for it, or down to the deep*, &c. For God, in his love to man, hath placed it nigher, even in man's mouth and heart, that he might hear it and do it, *Deut.* xxx. and *Rom.* x. And he that inclines his ear to this word, hears and obeys it, lives. And as it is the word of the new covenant (in which is the light and life of the new covenant), ſo it brings him into the new covenant, or makes an everlaſting covenant with him, even the ſure mercies of David, *Iſa.* lv. 3.

Another ſcripture is, 1 *John* i. 1. where he ſpeaks of the ſame word, of the ſame life, and of the ſame light, wherewith men are enlightened, and wherein they are to walk, *ver.* 7. That which is declared of, that which is to be teſtified of by the goſpel-miniſters, is the word, the life, the light. This is the meſſage Chriſt gave his apoſtles to preach, *That God is light*, ver. 5. What is the intent of this meſſage, but *that men might be turned from darkneſs to this light*, Acts xxvi. 18. And then the light enlightens them, and they ſoon come to feel life, and the word from which the life comes. And ſo they that truly receive the teſtimony of the light (which is the goſpel-meſſage, *ver.* 5.) they ſoon come to the manifeſtation of the life (or of him who is the life) in their own hearts, and ſo into fellowſhip with them that are in the light, and with the Father, and his Son Jeſus Chriſt alſo.

A third Scripture is, 2 *Cor.* iv. 6. which ſhews the way of enlightening the mind, which is by God's cauſing the light of life to ſhine in the heart; which being believed in, gives the *knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt*. God is a Spirit; the knowledge of him is ſpiritual, given and received in the ſhinings of his light in the heart.

Thus we receive the beginnings of our ſpiritual knowledge, and thus we receive the increaſe thereof day by day. In his light (in the ſhinings of his light in our hearts) we ſee light at firſt, and in the further ſhinings thereof we ſee more and more light.

The laſt place I ſhall mention, is *Matt.* xiii. 31. The kingdom of God was that which Chriſt much preached, and here he preacheth it as a *ſeed*

ſown

ſeed in the heart, and that a very little one. Now conſider if this be not the word of God in a ſeed, Chriſt in a ſeed, life in a ſeed, light in a ſeed, God's ſeed, (*his ſeed remaineth in him*, 1 John iii. 9.) Now this ſeed, as it grows in the heart, grows in its own life, light, nature, Spirit, power, *&c.* and puts all theſe forth in the heart in which it grows, againſt ſin, and towards righteouſneſs. Yea, the judgment of God is revealed in the ſpiritual light, life, and power of this word againſt ſin, and for righteouſneſs; and God's Sion, God's inward, ſpiritual Sion (or his people and children), is redeemed by the judgment and righteouſneſs which is revealed from and in this word in the heart. And this word is ſo powerful againſt ſin, that it doth not only cut it off, and waſh it away from the mind and conſcience, and ſo make them clean, but it alſo keeps the mind, in which it remains (as it is regarded and hearkened to), from joining to ſin any more; and if ſin cannot be joined to, it can neither be conceived nor brought forth, 1 *John* iii. 9. *James* iii. 15.

Object. *But by this doctrine, or experience (as thou calleſt it), Chriſt in his outward appearance, his ſacrifice and blood, as alſo the ſcriptures, with the exhortations and commands thereof, are all laid waſte, and made void, and of no uſe or effect, all being attributed to this word, life, and light within.*

Anſw. No, in no wiſe. This word within, with the life and light thereof, doth not make void any former appearance or miniſtration of God, but rather eſtabliſhes them, by owning them in their proper place, uſe, and ſervice. For he that truly owns this word, light, life, Spirit, power, *&c.* in his own heart, muſt alſo own it in the hearts of others, in Moſes, in the prophets, in John, and in its fulneſs in Chriſt in the fleſh; and the virtue of all it did in Chriſt, and by Chriſt in the fleſh, towards the ſalvation of mankind, which his obedience, and the ſhedding of his blood, was by the Father made abſolutely requiſite unto. And the ſcriptures, the inſtructions, reproofs, exhortations, commands thereof, *&c.* in the hand of the Spirit, are very uſeful to this day; and the ſhinings of Chriſt, and the quickenings of his life are felt in them, when the Lord manageth them unto the ſoul for good. Yea, the words that Chriſt ſpoke in the days of his fleſh, are Spirit and life to this day, when he ſpeaks them in the heart. But they are not life, as men apprehend, underſtand, or ſpeak them of themſelves, but rather death, as ſo made uſe of.

And thoſe that thus only learn the words, or practiſe the words, they do not learn aright, or practiſe aright; they do not know Chriſt aright, they do not believe aright, or repent aright; they cannot know Chriſt as he is the word of life in the heart, nor hear him, nor obey him, nor be circumciſed or baptized by him; but are drowned in literal apprehenſions and conceptions of their own, beneath him who is the life.

Thus the Jews, in their day, waited for the Meſſiah, and ſpake great things of the kingdom of the Meſſiah, but knew neither him nor his kingdom, when he appeared and preached it. So likewiſe, many now ſpeak

great things of Chriſt being come, and of his obedience, death reſurrection, aſcenſion, *&c.* and yet know not him, his voice, his appearance in their own hearts, or in the hearts of others; but think in their obedience to what they apprehend from the ſcriptures to have eternal life, whilſt ſtrangers to the living principle of truth, whereby he gives eternal life to his ſheep *that hear his voice, and follow the Lamb of God whereſoever he goes*, and leads along his ſheep with him, *John* x. 27, 28.

He that would know God and Chriſt to ſalvation, muſt know them in that myſtery of light and life, wherein and whereby they ſave and deliver from the myſtery of ſin and death; for there is the myſtery of God, the myſtery of the Father, the myſtery of Chriſt, the myſtery of the goſpel, the revelation of the myſtery, the preaching of the myſtery, the myſtery of the kingdom of God, the ſpeaking the wiſdom of God in a myſtery, the riches of the glory of the myſtery, the acknowledgment of the myſtery, the fellowſhip of the myſtery, and the myſtery of the faith held in a pure conſcience. The true miniſters of Chriſt are ſtewards of the myſteries of God. They have the treaſure of life in their earthen veſſels, and are to give forth from that treaſure to thoſe they miniſter to, and bring them to the diſcerning and partaking of the ſame treaſure in themſelves.

Oh! conſider! conſider! all ye profeſſors of Chriſt, and of the Chriſtian religion! There is a myſterious power that begets, a myſterious womb that conceives and brings forth, a myſterious birth that is begotten and brought forth, which hungers after the myſtery, and is fed with the knowledge, life, and virtue of the myſtery. That birth which is of a nature below this, or feeds on a knowledge below this, and hath a faith and hope beneath the nature of the faith and hope which God gives to this birth, is but the child or birth of the bond-woman, which is not to inherit with Iſaac the true heir; but all ſuch kind of children of the kingdom muſt be caſt out, with the bond-woman their mother, *Matt.* viii. 22. Gal. iv. 30.

The birth of the Father's Spirit and power, is only the true inward Jew or Chriſtian, to which the promiſes, the kingdom, and everlaſting ſalvation belongs; and all elſe are but pretenders to be what they are not; who after all the fires of their own kindling, and ſparks wherewith they compaſs themſelves about, will at laſt lie down in ſorrow from the hand of the Lord. Oh! that none might be deceived by the enemy of their ſoul, about matters of ſo great concern!

Eighteenth of the 5th Month, 1679.

I. P.

EPISTLES

EPISTLES to FRIENDS.

EPISTLE I.

To FRIENDS in and about the Two Chalfonts.

DEAR FRIENDS,

YE have a deep place in my heart, and my cries are to the Lord for you, that ye may live to him, and find his life ſpringing up and abounding in you. What is it to have a diſtinct name, or diſtinct meetings from the world, unleſs the power of the Lord be felt in your hearts, and his preſence in your aſſemblies? Oh! that the Lord would awaken you! Oh! that the Lord would quicken you! Oh! that it would pleaſe the Lord to raiſe up a ſtrict watch in you, againſt all drowſineſs, and careleſſneſs, and temptations, and ſnares of the enemy, that ye may travel on your journey, with your backs upon the world, and your faces towards Sion; never looking back to the fleſhly nature, deſires, or luſts, to entertain any thing of that any more, which ye have parted with in the demonſtrations and leading of life, but ſtill preſſing on further and further, till ye come to apprehend and be poſſeſſed of that, for which ye have been apprehended by God, and drawn in ſome meaſure towards.

O my friends! There is a path of life in which ye muſt travel, even to the very end of it, or the crown of life is not to be received! Oh! that ye might travel on! Oh! that nothing might ſtop you! Oh! that ye might every day wait for and feel the leader, and walk on with him in the ſimplicity, uprightneſs, and ſenſe of his life, out of the reach of that wiſdom, which is ever and anon forming reaſonings in the heart againſt it, and ſtriving to darken, and make the plain way of God intricate to the ſoul!

My life often reacheth to you, my ſoul exceedingly longeth after you! And in the ſtirrings of the ſame life be ye alſo helpful to me, crying to the Lord for me, that I may abide with him, feel his preſervation, and dwell in that which he hath choſen to appear to and refreſh the ſoul in, that I may be acceptable to him, and further helpful to you, in the ſeaſon of the ſtirrings

ſtirrings of his precious and powerful life in my heart. The Lord God of mercy watch over you, pruning and keeping down all the earthlineſs and corruption in any of you, and watering and cheriſhing his own plant in you all, that ye may daily witneſs the dying and decreaſe of the one, and the quickening and growth of the other, even till death be perfectly conſumed and ſwallowed up by the growth, power, and preſence of the immortal life in you, and your ſouls ſafe and happy in your God.

And ſo to the tender mercies and care of the Lord do I give you all up, breatheing for you (as for my own ſoul) that ye may be perfectly the Lord's, perfectly given unto him, perfectly waiting upon him, and daily receiving into your precious veſſels the precious living teſtimonies of his love and acceptance, and his ſweet heavenly dews, which will exceedingly refreſh and make your hearts glad, as he cauſeth them to deſcend and light upon you. So that which is of God in your hearts every day, wait to feel God breatheing upon, that it may open unto him, receive ſtrength from him, and ye in it be more and more gathered and united to the Lord, even till ye wholly become one nature, mind, and ſpirit with him; and then ye will ſee the end of your travels, and ſit down in his joy, and peace, and pure reſt, from all labouring after life, and all ſorrows for the want and abſence of it, and all fears of loſing or being ſeparated from it; being eſtabliſhed in the power which is over all, and which preſerveth all that are encompaſſed with it, and eſtabliſhed in it, for ever and ever.

From my preſent place of Confinement in Alisbury, according to the will of God; who is bleſſed, and to be bleſſed in all that he doth, or ſuffereth to be done: 22d of the 3d month 1666.

Your friend and brother, in the meek innocent nature of the Lamb, and in the begetting of the royal heavenly life,

I. P.

Oh! my friends! prize the rich tender mercy of the Lord, in calling you out of this world, towards his everlaſting inheritance and fullneſs of life! And let not any thing of this world come between him and you; but let all that is of this worldly nature, both within and without, be trampled upon by you, and the price of the high calling of our God in Chriſt Jeſus, be faithfully and earneſtly purſued after; that none fall ſhort of the hope and glory ſet before him, but that every one may ſo run, as certainly to obtain and enjoy for ever, even the dominion and reign of God over all that is contrary to him, and the ſitting down in the reſt, joy, and peace of his nature for evermore. *Amen.*

EPISTLE

EPISTLE II.

To Friends in Truth, in and about the Two Chalfonts.

OH! let every ſoul wait to feel the pure life of God, that in that we may wreſtle with our tender Father, for the opening the depth of his bowels and tender mercy, that that may be brought forth in every veſſel, and in the whole body, which may make the glory of his name ſhine, and may fill the veſſels of his choice with the joy and pleaſure of his ſalvation! Oh! that the pure meaſure of his life might be awakened and raiſed in your aſſemblies together, that ye might feel the pure fountain, the ſprings opening in you, the ſtreams running through you, and every ſoul refreſhed, filled, and ſatisfied; that ye might go away bleſſing his name, who hath taught you and given you hearts to wait upon him, and who ſheweth you mercy, and giveth you acceptance in your waitings!

And, dear friends! watch, that life may be always freſh and ſavoury in you, to the ſeaſoning of all your thoughts, words, converſations, and actions, that ye may feel the name of God written upon you, and his precious preſence in you, and with you.

And in this freſhneſs remember me, to whom the Lord hath given to remember and breathe for you, who am a priſoner, and have ſuffered many afflictions, becauſe that of God which is in me cannot bow to that which is of man.

From Aylesbury priſon, the 23d of the Sixth month, 1666.

I. P.

EPISTLE III.

To diligent and faithful Friends, in and about the Two Chalfonts.

O tender and dearly-beloved friends,

MY ſpirit is at this time touched with the ſenſe of the great goodneſs and mercy of the Lord, inſomuch as I feel breakings forth therein, and repeating there over and over again, Oh! what hath the Lord done for us, what hath the Lord done for us? For he hath not only given us

us a ſenſe and taſte of the precious promiſes in the ſcripture, but hath alſo led us in the way of the fulfilling of them. He hath manifeſted that to us, wherein not only the promiſe is made, but whereto alſo the promiſe is fulfilled. Which of you, that is open and freſh, doth not know the ſeed of life, the living principle, the light eternal, which leads out of death and darkneſs, into the land of the living, the holy land, wherein dwells peace and righteouſneſs, the land which flows with milk and honey, wherein are the vineyards which ye planted not, and the houſes that ye built not, wherein the true vine grows, and its branches ſhoot forth and bear the right grapes? Oh! my friends, do ye not know the Father which begat you, and the Son in whoſe image he hath begotten you, and his Spirit, which is the breath, ſtrength, and power of your life? How hath the Lord God advanced you, a poor, afflicted, deſpiſed, perſecuted remnant, above all kindreds, families, and profeſſions of the earth? How nigh is the Lord your God unto you? Doth he not tabernacle and dwell in you? Do ye not feel him walking up and down, and taking delight in your ſpirits, who are ſeparated from the unclean thing, and to whom ſubjection to him is become pleaſant and natural. Oh! the Lord God give his people a ſenſe what he is unto them in this day, and lead them along into their ſeveral poſſeſſions and inheritances, that they may ſit down with Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, each in his portion in the holy land, and in the heavenly dwelling-places in Chriſt Jeſus, which the ſouls of thoſe that are redeemed by him are acquainted with and ſit in.

It is on my heart to inſtance in ſome things a little more particularly, that the ſenſe and remembrance of God's goodneſs to you herein, may come the nearer and cloſer to your ſpirits.

Firſt, Have ye not had experience of the Lord's love and faithfulneſs in manifeſting his name unto you, which ye have in ſome meaſure known, as pure, precious, and excellent, as a ſtrong tower in caſe of danger and aſſaults from the enemy? And hath not the Lord taught you, by a ſecret inſtinct of his Spirit and life in you, to retire and hide yourſelves in this tower, from the violence and fury of the enemy? And have ye not always found relief, ſafety, and protection therein? Indeed, when ye have gone out into your own thoughts, and conſulted with the reaſons of the fleſhly mind, there ye have met with a wound and a hurt, and have lain open to the ſtroke of the betrayer and devourer; but the name of the Lord hath never deceived or diſappointed any of you that have truſted in it, relying upon his kindneſs, tenderneſs, mercy, love and faithfulneſs therein.

Secondly, Hath not the Lord given you a proportion of the pure heavenly patience, even of the Lamb's meekneſs and patience, and alſo given you to poſſeſs your ſouls therein, wherein hath been felt a true meaſure of reſt and peace with him, in the midſt of all the diſturbances, fears, and troubles, both within and without? And hath not this been an help and ſuccour to you, even in the time of his judgments, wherein ye have been enabled to

wait

wait and lie ſtill, until the indignation was over-paſt, and the mercy ſprang afreſh?

Thirdly, Hath not God manifeſted to you the place of his worſhip, even ſo that ye know, and have often experienced it to be in his name, Spirit, truth, and power? And hath he not prepared for you, and given to you, the pure offering and ſacrifice, and accepted it at your hands? And have ye not often, yea, may I not ſay always, felt his preſence meeting there, and the refreſhments which come from his preſence in this day of his mercy, and of his tender viſiting and refreſhing his ſeed?

Fourthly, Have ye not felt the word of his power ſhaking the mountains, breaking the rocks, and making the dark hard part in you, and the enemy of your ſouls, to tremble at the ſound of his voice? Yea, have ye not found thereby the ſtony heart in a great meaſure taken out of you, and a tender heart, an heart like fleſh, given you inſtead thereof, which hath melted and bowed before the Lord, and tenderly received the impreſſions of his Spirit?

Fifthly, Have ye not found the laws of life, the laws of the new covenant written by the finger of God's Spirit in this new heart, ſo that ye could read the will and requirings of your God, by the light of his Spirit in the inner man?

Sixthly, Hath not he alſo put his Spirit within you, that ye have not only read the law written, but have alſo found a delight (and ability alſo in him) to do his will? For the Lord hath not left you to do what he requires, according to the old covenant, but he himſelf worketh in you both to will and to do what is acceptable to him of his own good pleaſure.

Seventhly, Have ye not found his fear put into your hearts, even a fear which no precepts of men can teach, nor ye can by no means attain to, but as he pleaſeth to give it you? And doth not this fear make you wiſe in him to depart from evil? Doth it not cleanſe out the evil? Doth it not keep out the evil? Did ye not find this virtue in it at the very firſt, and do ye not ſtill find it to this very day?

Eighthly, Do ye not find the blotting out of iniquity, and the not remembering of your ſins by the Lord? Ah! how hath the Lord forgiven you? How doth the Lord pity you? How doth he bear with you? Do ye not know the place and ſtate wherein mercy pleaſeth him, and where he is never weary of pardoning, blotting out, and forgiving? Do ye not feel the ſprinkling of the blood of the covenant daily by him upon your conſciences, and the precious virtue thereof?

Ninthly, Do ye not find the anointing near you, yea within you, ready to teach you to know the Lord, ſo that ye indeed know him, not according to outward names and apprehenſions only, but his nature in his heavenly power, in his inward virtue, manifeſtations, operations, and appearances in you? And this is true knowledge indeed, pure knowledge, freſh knowledge, living knowledge, which makes you conformable to, and brings you forth in, the image and likeneſs of what ye know.

Tenthly, Is not the way of the ranſomed, the way of holineſs, become clear and pleaſant to you? Hath not the Lord removed many ſtumbling-blocks, that he might make the way plain? And is it not a path wherein there is no erring, wherein a way-farer may walk without fear or danger, the light is ſo certain, the guide ſo faithful, and the path ſo eaſy and viſible to the plain, honeſt, ſingle, upright heart, who freely giveth up to the Lord, and waiteth to be taught and led by him? Indeed to the wiſe, reaſoning, diſputing mind it is not thus, nor to you at any time when that part is up; but as that is brought down, and the ſimplicity of Chriſt (the innocent birth) raiſed in you, do ye not ſtill feel it thus? Therefore ye had need to watch, and pray, and wait, and believe, that ye may know and enjoy the preciouſneſs of your ſpiritual eſtates and conditions in the Lord, and that that which would corrupt and deſtroy, may (by the lifting up and diſplaying of the banner of his love and power in you) be beat down and kept out.

Eleventhly, Hath not God given you of the true humility, whereby that which was once exalted in you above his fear and above his ſeed, is now brought down and laid low, and his pure life and fear in you exalted over it? Do ye not know the feigned humility and fear (which man's wiſdom teacheth, and man's wiſdom learneth), and abhor them? And is not the true fear and humility which ye have received from God, very precious, and of great uſe and ſervice to you?

Twelfthly, Have ye not received the true love, whereby ye are taught and enabled to love the Lord your God above all, and the brethren, children, and fathers in him; yea, and your very enemies alſo. How precious is this! Who can witneſs this, but he who hath received it! But he whoſe heart the Lord hath circumciſed, and from which he hath cut off the enmity and contentious nature, which cannot truly love neither the Lord nor his people, nor his creatures, though it maketh a ſubtil deceitful ſhew thereof, to the deluding both of itſelf and others.

Thirteenthly, Do ye not know the true righteouſneſs, and the true ſanctification which is in Chriſt Jeſus, and which ye receive and abide in in him, which formerly (in a great meaſure) ye did but talk of, and which many to this day (whom the Lord hath not gathered, as he hath done you, but hath left behind, out of the power, out of the calling, out of the election) have only the words of, and their own apprehenſions upon the words, but know not, nor feel, nor enjoy the thing itſelf, as ye do this day, bleſſed be the name of your merciful God and Redeemer.

Fourteenthly, Do ye not know Sion, the holy hill of God, and Jeruſalem the holy city which is built thereon, which hath long been hid, even from ages and generations, but now is made manifeſt in the Spirit, and many are already come thither, and many more are travelling thither-wards, and ſome dwell and abide therein, and feel the law going forth out of Sion, and the word of the Lord from Jeruſalem, and find their ſouls tranſlated

by

by the mighty power of God from death, and hell, and enmity, into the nature, love, and life of the Lamb; in whose light those that are saved and redeemed by him, walk?

Fifteenthly, Do ye not know the true church and body of Christ, which is one spirit with him, which is flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bones? And hath not the Lord in his mercy made you members thereof? And do ye not feel the nourishment, virtue, life, and Spirit of the whole body in your own vessels, and so are partakers of the true union and fellowship, both with the Lord Jesus Christ, and one with another? For he that is gathered by, and walks in the true light, is also in the true life and fellowship, both with that which begets, and with that which is begotten.

Sixteenthly, Do ye not know the kingdom and reign of Christ already in measure set up, and daily more and more setting up in your hearts? And is not his government sweet, pure, heavenly, precious, refreshing to that which is of God in you, and an iron hammer and sceptre to that which is earthly and fleshly. And is it not your joy to feel him reign and overcome his enemies, exalting his holy name, power, and sceptre over them? And what he hath done, and what he is doing, and what he yet will do in you, of his own tender love, and for his own name's sake, do not your hearts leap within you, when at any time the Lord pleaseth to give you the sense and sight thereof?

Seventeenthly, Do ye not know the fast which the Lord hath chosen, and hath not the Lord helped you to keep that fast? Have ye not felt his power break the bond of iniquity in you, and the once oppressed in you coming up in a true measure of the pure freedom, to serve and worship the Lord? And have ye not also had a taste of the feast which the Lord hath prepared on his holy mountain, even of the fat things, and wines on the lees well refined, which they that inhabit there eat and drink of abundantly in his presence?

Eighteenthly, Do ye not feel God the Lord making an everlasting covenant with you, even of the love and mercies sure to David and his seed forevermore? Is not he near you, yea with you and in you, who is the gatherer into, and the preserver in, this covenant? Yea, do not ye feel him teaching and enabling you to keep covenant with the Lord your God (by the virtue, power, and presence of his life and Spirit in you), even as he keepeth covenant with you? Insomuch as ye begin to feel a settlement and establishment in him that is true, and your calling and election becoming sure, and the danger and fear of falling away or miscarrying, removing from off your spirits?

What shall I say to you, what shall I mention further, or what shall I instance in? Have ye not felt the wilderness become a fruitful field, and the fruitful field become a forest? Have ye not felt the lame walk, the deaf hear, the blind see, the dumb speak, the leper cleansed, the dead raised, &c.? Have ye not witnessed the sore shaking, and terrible passing away (in

meaſure) of the old heavens and old earth, and the forming, planting, and bringing in (in meaſure) of the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwells righteouſneſs, in the ſtead thereof? So that in places where dragons lay, is now green graſs, with ſweet-ſmelling flowers; and in the once parched, dead, dry, barren, deſolate heaths, are now ſprings and flowings of the pure living water?

Friends; There is one, whom the Father hath ſealed (and he is but one, yea the very ſame in us all), in whom are all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge, and all the riches and ſubſtance of life; and we, through the mercy and goodneſs of the Lord, partake thereof, as we are gathered into him, found in him, and abide in him.

And now my friends; What hath differenced us from others, or why hath the Lord done this for us more than for others? Search your hearts, ſee if any of you can find the cauſe thereof in yourſelves. Indeed I cannot. From my very heart I cannot but cry grace, grace! mercy, mercy! love, love (deep, tender love)! goodneſs, goodneſs! from the very firſt beginning, all along, throughout the whole carrying on of the work, to this day; and I have nothing elſe to hope in, or plead before my God. Do I believe? It is he gave me faith; yea, he putteth it forth, and cauſeth it to act in me, or I eaſily fail therein. Do I will that which is good in any kind? My will is of him, yea it is in him, and hath its creation, preſervation, being, and ſtrength from him. Do I obey or do that which is good? No, no, not I; but his life, power, and Spirit in me. Do I ſuffer inwardly or outwardly? That is not of me neither, but he that hath given me to believe, he alſo giveth me to ſuffer, and beareth up my ſpirit in my ſufferings, by his power, and for his name's ſake. So that my heart ſaith (and I confidently believe he will, in his mercy and goodneſs, preſerve me in that ſenſe for ever), Not unto me, not unto me, in any one reſpect, but to thy name, to thy holy name, to thy tender name, to thy infinite bowels, and precious love and compaſſions in every reſpect, be the acknowledgment and praiſe given of what thou haſt done, and yet doſt, and wilt do in and for my ſoul, for ever and ever.

And now, my dear friends; As the Lord hath demonſtrated the way of life unto you, ſo that it is ſealed in your ſpirits, and ye have walked in it, and always met with, not only the promiſes of life, but even life itſelf therein; ſo the Lord ſtill watch over you, that nothing ever blind that eye in you, which alone can ſee this way; and the Lord preſerve you in uprightneſs of heart, that ye may ſingly wait on him, for his farther manifeſting of it in you and to you; and that he, by his living Spirit, would continually quicken and rouſe up your ſpirits, to walk diligently and faithfully therein; that ſo ye may come to ſee what ye have not yet ſeen, and to deſire what ye have not deſired, and may find your hearts and inheritances enlarged in the Lord. Ah! what is the world, or any worldly thing or intereſt, in compariſon of this! The Lord remove every ſnare and every

ſtumbling-

ſtumbling-block out of your way, and every weight and burthen from off your ſpirits, that ye may run with joyfulneſs to the end of your courſe, and may enter into the full kingdom and poſſeſſion of life. Ye have received already that which is all; but ye muſt wait for the farther opening and ſpreading of it in you, and your farther growth into it. The Lord's ſoul hath travailed for you, and his faithful meſſengers have likewiſe travailed and ſought after your ſouls, and your ſouls have travailed, and mourned, and waited, and gone through temptations and trials of many kinds, and had a taſte of the true peace, the true holineſs, the true righteouſneſs, the true joy, even the joy of the everlaſting kingdom. Now the Lord God preſerve you, that nothing may interrupt or come between you and that, wherein ye have felt him, and wherein is his riches and fulneſs; but that ye may always feel that, and abide faithful to the Lord in that, wherein the preſervation and growth unto life eternal alone is witneſſed.

And friends; Put the Lord in mind, that as he hath pleaſed to manifeſt the way, and ſhew that clearly unto you, whereby the heart is joined to him and preſerved in him; ſo he would pleaſe, of his free and tender mercy, to add this alſo, even to give upright hearts and entire ſpirits, to abide with him in that principle of life wherein he hath gathered you, and to watch unto, and be faithful to, all his warnings, drawings, movings, and leadings, that his Spirit may have no matter of grief againſt you, but it may be the delight of his ſoul to do you good continually, and to anſwer the deſire of your ſouls in every thing that ye breathe unto him for; that the Lord may not be aſhamed to own you to be his people, and ye may feel with joy, and abundant conſolation, that he is your God. And this will be enough in all the tribulations, afflictions, and trials that ye meet with, either inwardly or outwardly. So the God of love and peace preſerve you, in that wherein is fellowſhip with him, and in which his life, love, joy, and peace naturally and delightfully ſpring up, and flow into the ſoul. *Amen, Amen.*

Written in Aylesbury goal, about the Ninth and Tenth of the Twelfth Month, 1666.

E P.

EPISTLE

EPISTLE IV.

For Friends of our MEETING, and thereabouts.

DEAR FRIENDS,

I AM deeply ſenſible that it is a day of trouble, rebuke, and diſtreſs, to the Iſrael of God. The Lord hath pitched his pure, living tent, and begun to build up his beloved city; the Lord hath indeed had mercy upon Sion, and favoured the ruins and deſolations thereof. But the malice and rage of the enemy is great, who ſeeketh to compaſs the tent of the holy and the beloved city, that he may lay waſte and deſtroy the work and heritage of God. Now all that feel life, all that are of the true birth, all that know the ſeed; oh! abide, live, and breathe in the ſeed, that ye may come forth in the true life, and in the ſtrength of God's holy Spirit (with ſtrong cries and tears, with innocency and righteouſneſs, with meekneſs and patience, *&c.*), to the help of the Lord againſt the mighty. We have no ſtrength but our God, nor is our expectation from man (whoſe breath is in his noſtrils, who is to be ceaſed from); but we believe the voice, that not by ſtrength, nor by man's power, but by my Spirit, ſaith the Lord of hoſts, ſhall this work of his be preſerved and go on. Therefore every one wait to feel the ſeed travail and cry daily to the Father, that ſo the ſpirit of darkneſs may be hindered, and by the power of life withſtood, in all its enterprizes againſt the children of light. Oh! let the condition of Jeruſalem be written upon every one's heart; and as members of the living body, feel the wants, afflictions, and diſtreſſes of your fellow-members day by day. And let every one ſay in ſpirit;

Lord, take care of all thy children. Oh! thou tender Father, conſider what they ſuffer for the teſtimony of thy truth, and for thy name's ſake, and uphold them, and give them victory, and an holy dominion over all, becauſe it belongs to thy ſeed into which thou haſt gathered them, and in which thou haſt united them to thyſelf. Oh! carry on thy glorious work, which thy own mighty arm hath begun, and cut it ſhort in righteouſneſs for thine Elect's ſake, that it may be finiſhed by thee, to thine own everlaſting praiſe. Thy children wait on thee, they cry to thee day and night, that they may be preſerved by thee in the well-doing, and in the pure, holy, innocent ſufferings for thy truth's ſake; until thou ſay, It is enough, until thy holy Spirit ſay, It is finiſhed: my lambs, ye ſhall ſuffer no more, but now ye ſhall reign with me and my Son for ever.

My dear friends, it is now the time of prayer, and of waiting upon, and hoping in, the Lord, who knoweth and conſidereth all our conditions. If any be afflicted, let him pray. We are afflicted, we are oppreſſed without cauſe

cauſe or provocation on our parts, only becauſe we fear, and love, and obey our God, according as he hath taught us, and becauſe he hath put this reſolution into our hearts, that we will abide in ſubjection to him, and ſtand to the holy teſtimony which he hath given us to bear, whatever befalls us. And what ſhall ſeparate us from his love, or come between us and his care over us, who is able to bear us up in all, and carry us over all (in the holy dominion and ſtrength of his ſeed) that can ſet upon us, and ſtrive to turn us out of the way, or to make us faint in the way?

Dear friends, In my bonds I remember you, and pray for your proſperity. Do ye alſo remember me in your daily addreſſes and approaches to God, that I may receive increaſe of virtue and ſtrength from the Lord, by the help of your prayers; and, oh! feel the afflictions of the afflicted, and breathe for them day by day, that the whole body may receive the flowings in of life, help, and ſtrength daily, from the pure breathings of life in every member of the body every day.

So the God of love and mercies be with, and do good to, his whole heritage; and fill you (with the reſt of his children) from the pure fountain of life, with freſh ſtreams of life day by day, *Amen*. This is the hearty deſire of

Reading Goal, the 9th of the Sixth Month, 1670.

Your friend, brother, and companion in the faith and patience of the ſaints, who have had a ſhare in the afflictions which befall his children and choſen ones for his name's ſake,

I. P.

And truly friends, it is not grievous, but rather joy to me, to undergo the ſeveral afflictions and temptations, which my tender Father, in his tender love and good-will, orders for me. Yea, all that can taſte, tell me, is it not greater riches, and far ſweeter, in this our day, to bear the reproach of Chriſt, and to ſuffer for the teſtimony of his precious truth, than to enjoy the pleaſures of ſin and glory of this world, which are but for a ſeaſon?

EPISTLE

EPISTLE V.

To Friends in Truth, in Chalfont, and thereabouts.

Dear friends (whom I love in the Lord, and whoſe proſperity and growth in the truth I greatly deſire), this ſenſe is on my heart, in reference to you at this time.

THE Lord's ſoul travaileth for you (having viſited you in tender mercy, and with great loving-kindneſs, and he deſireth to enjoy and poſſeſs you, as an inheritance for himſelf, to delight in and to do good unto continually; and I know there are many among you, who have alſo deſired and travailed after the Lord, and have been burthened and grieved with that which hath in any meaſure hindered your ſouls enjoying the Lord, and your faithful ſerving him, and his delight and pleaſure in you. Now friends, this is my preſent deſire and breatheing for you, even that ye may be joined further and cloſer in the everlaſting covenant of life and peace with the Lord, which muſt never be forgotten on your parts, as it cannot be on his; wherein to help all the tender and faithful-hearted among you, this advice ſprang in my heart to you this morning.

Mind and watch to that which quickens and enlivens the ſoul towards God, and watch againſt that which flats and deadens it; for they are both near, and they both ſeek after you, the one for your good, the other for your hurt. I need not tell you what theſe are, nor where or how they appear (ye have been abundantly, and as ye wait on the Lord, are daily inſtructed therein, bleſſed be the name of the Lord), but in continual watching to the one, and againſt the other, is the diligence and care of your ſpirits daily to be exerciſed. Oh! at no time let your ſpirits be looſe and careleſs! For the enemy waits to do hurt, and the Lord waits to be gracious, and to do your ſouls good. Watch, therefore, and pray, that ye enter not into the temptation of the enemy, nor miſs of the tender mercies and loving-kindneſſes of the Lord, which are ſure to the ſeed (and to all that are of and abide in the ſeed) for ever.

Oh! who would miſs of the quickening virtue of our God, of being anointed with his holy oil, and of having the flames of life kindled further in him? Who would be captivated and brought into ſubjection to ſin, Satan, vanity, and the ſpirit of this world again, who hath witneſſed any proportion of deliverance there-from? Ye know that ye can do nothing of yourſelves: Oh! what need have ſuch to watch to that, which is able to work mightily in the heart, and to bring forth the fruits and effects of righteouſneſs,

righteouſneſs, and to bring under, and keep under, kill and ſlay that power of unrighteouſneſs, and to root out and bury the dead, out of the ſight and remembrance of the living. Glorious things are teſtified (truly teſtified) concerning the power of the Lord, and his mighty operation inwardly in the hearts of his children, in this day of the preaching of the everlaſting goſpel again, after the long night of darkneſs. Let none be content, without witneſſing and experiencing a meaſure thereof in their own particular. Oh! dwell not with death, vanity, nor corruption! Oh! my dear friends, let not vain or earthly thoughts lodge in any of your hearts! but dwell with him who is pure, who is living, and gives life to your ſouls; and alſo gives peace, and brings it home to you, leaving upon your ſpirits that *peace which paſſeth all the underſtanding* and comprehenſion of man, and who maketh his called, choſen, and faithful ones glad with his deliverance from the power and temptation of the enemy, and with the flowings in of life and redeeming virtue, from the fountain thereof. Judea (the city) is known among the living, *whoſe walls are ſalvation, and all the gates and entrance into it praiſe.*

And, my dear friends, mind your meetings together, to wait upon your God with great ſeriouſneſs and intention of ſpirit, every one watching to feel life up in your own ſpirits. Oh! ſit down (yea, breathe earneſtly to the Lord to give you to ſit down) in the ſilence of fleſh, and in the ſtillneſs of your ſpirits, waiting for the preſence, appearance, and power of your God to be revealed in the midſt of you, that your hearts may be ſearched more and more, and the pure judgment revealed againſt whatever would appear or riſe up contrary to the holy nature and will of God, and that which is for death, brought into death more and more, and ſo the bread and water of life given to that which is to be nouriſhed up in life, that all that is impure may be kept down, and that which is pure (the plants and trees of righteouſneſs) may thrive, flouriſh, and ſpread more and more, and you ſit down under the ſhadow of your own vine and olive-tree, partaking of the ſap and fatneſs thereof.

Oh! that every one of you, in all your meetings together, might witneſs that ſcripture fulfilled in you; *They ſhall be abundantly ſatisfied with the fatneſs of thy houſe, and thou ſhalt give them, or make them to drink, of the rivers of thy pleaſure.*

And I beſeech you, in the bowels of tender love, take heed of ſluggiſhneſs, or careleſſneſs, or deadneſs of ſpirit in your meetings; theſe things in no-wiſe become the Lord's people, nor your profeſſions of waiting upon the living God; ye are to look up, to watch, wait, and breathe for the Lord, to be exerciſed by his Spirit, to have to do with him before whom all things are naked and bare, to offer up that acceptable ſacrifice of a broken heart, of pure praiſes, of love, life, humility, thankſgiving, *&c.* and to receive what the Father of mercies ſtands ready (in and through the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Son of his love) to give forth unto you. Can you

be thus exerciſed, while in a drowſy, ſluggiſh, careleſs ſpirit? Do not ſuch diſhonour the Lord, whoſe name ye ſhould honour? And is not the jealous God provoked and grieved by ſuch things as theſe, whom ye ſhould walk in all humility, tenderneſs of ſpirit, and well-pleaſingneſs before?

I beſeech you, therefore, watch againſt all things of this nature, and be diligent, that ye may witneſs the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus making you free, and fencing you againſt all things of this kind, that ye may be a choſen generation, a royal prieſthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, a temple of living ſtones, wherein the living God may dwell and walk, and ſup with you, and give unto you to ſup with him, where ye ſhall eat the pure bread life, and drink the wine of the kingdom, which will glad your hearts exceedingly, and the joy of the Lord will become your ſtrength; which ſtrength will carry you above the ſtrength of the enemy, and cauſe you to bring forth the fruits of life, and righteouſneſs, naturally to the Lord; and ſo you ſhall ſhine as lights in your ſeveral places, and ſhew forth the praiſes of him, who hath called you out of darkneſs into his marvellous light; for it is a marvellous light indeed, which the Lord hath cauſed to ſhine in the ſpirits of his children, whom in this day of his power he hath begotten to himſelf, and the life eternal is wrapped up in it; and they that truly know it, know it to be no leſs than the light of life, even the light which came from the pure life of the Son, and leads to the habitation and dwelling-place of the Father.

There is one thing yet remains with me, which I would fain have you grow in a true, ſenſible, and experimental underſtanding of, which is this; to wit, What it is, not to touch the unclean thing. The enemy will be ſtirring up and caſting in that which is unclean, upon the veſſels which God is purifying and preſerving from all pollution. But there is a ſtarting back from, and eſchewing the evil, a forſaking of the vain earthly mind and thoughts, and a receiving in ſuch temptations and ſuggeſtions no more. Oh! that ye might all experimentally know and witneſs what this is! I know many of you do in ſome meaſure, bleſſed be the God of our mercies, bleſſed be our Saviour and Redeemer, for ever and ever! But oh! more, more, more of this knowledge, more of this experience, my heart livingly breathes for, for myſelf and you, that we may witneſs the ſcripture abundantly fulfilled in our hearts from the Lord: *Whoſoever is born of God doth not commit ſin; for his ſeed remains in him, and he cannot ſin, becauſe he is born of God.* Oh! feel the weight of this ſcripture, in that which gives the underſtanding of it! The Lord hath made a new covenant, and a living covenant, and prepared a new and living way for the ranſomed to walk in without erring, that he might amend all (in this new people) which was amiſs in thoſe under the firſt covenant.

Oh! let the Lord enjoy the deſign of his heart, and his people ſo wait upon him, that they may all be renewed in the ſpirit of their minds, and the Lord may have a generation of Calebs and Joſhuas, who may fully follow

follow after him in all things, and who may witneſs his power and preſence ſtill with them, and the holy, tender, merciful God may never be provoked by them, to cauſe him to withdraw his good Spirit from them, and ſo to leave them and forſake them; for if any draw back from the Lord, and from the holy commandment of life, the Lord's ſoul can have no pleaſure in ſuch. Oh! that, therefore, there may be none among you drawing back to perdition! and take heed of deadneſs, drowſineſs, ſluggiſhneſs of ſpirit, earthlineſs, fleſhly wiſdom, unbelief, *&c.* for that is a degree thereof, and leadeth thitherwards), but all to grow in faith, with diligence, towards the ſaving of your ſouls (which is far nearer than when you firſt believed), which ye ſhall be ſure in due time to reap even the ſalvation ye wait for, if ye faint not, nor grow weary in your minds, but abide in the faith and patience, unto the end of your trials, both inward and outward, which are meaſured out by the Spirit and wiſdom of the Lord, and not by the wiles of your enemies, whom the Lord ſtops and chains at his pleaſure.

The grace, mercy, love, and peace of God our Father, and of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, be multiplied unto you, and fill your hearts from day to day, according to your ſeveral capacities, and enlarge your capacities, and bring you more and more into the heavenly fellowſhip, that your joy therein may abound, and ye may daily rejoice in the goodneſs of the Lord, and in his exerciſing loving-kindneſs, judgment, and righteouſneſs in the earth.

Reading Goal, the 22d of the Third Month, 1671.

This is from your brother and companion in the afflictions, and alſo in the joy and glory of this day of the ſalvation of our God, which is further to be revealed and enjoyed by thoſe who meekly and patiently wait for it,

I. P.

And all my dear friends, who have known what it is to be uncovered and ſtripped of your own righteouſneſs (and of all fleſhly robes and garments), and to put on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, even the innocency and righteouſs of his nature and Spirit, and ſo to appear before the Lord, and walk with him in the garment which he puts upon you; oh! friends, keep this garment about you, that ye be not ſtripped and robbed of that wherewith God once cloathed you, and ſo your nakedneſs appear, and men ſee your ſhame; and inſtead of being an honour, ye become (any of you) a reproach to the name and truth of the Lord, which is very honourable, and ſhould be honoured in and by us all.

The direction of this in my heart, was to friends in truth, in Chalfont, and thereaways, among whom my heart hath been greatly comforted and refreshed, who (some of you) had some knowledge of my former great misery and distress, for want of the power and presence of the Lord, and are now witnesses with me of his tender mercy and great salvation; glory to him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb whose kingdom is exalted over all, who already reigns in righteousness in the hearts of a remnant; who sit down, and find rest and peace, and true joy of heart, soul, and spirit, under the shadow of his government, and cannot but sing and sound forth praises, pure praises, honour, and dominion, and strength, to the name and arm which hath done the valiant acts, bringing sin, corruption, death, and the grave under, and bringing life and immortality to rule and have dominion over it; so that he that is pure power and life, is felt tabernacling and living in his people, and he gives unto them to live in, and through, and with him; and they cannot but sound praises to the power and glory of his life from day to day; glory in the highest to our God, and to his Christ, for ever and ever, *Amen*, *Hallelujah*.

SOME

QUERIES

CONCERNING

COMPULSION in RELIGION.

Query 1. WHETHER every man ought not to endeavour to be fully persuaded in his own soul concerning the religion and worship which he performs and offers up to God?

Query 2. Whether, when a man is fully persuaded concerning the religion and worship he ought to perform to God, whether he is not then bound in conscience so to worship and serve God, as he is fully persuaded in his own soul?

Query 3. Whether, if a man should leave that way of religion and worship, whereof he is fully persuaded in his own soul, and should worship according to the law and worship of the country wherein he lives, whether this would be accepted of the Lord, and whether his soul would not be in danger of the displeasure and wrath of the Lord therefore?

Query

Query 4. Whether God hath given any man or men power, by laws and penalties, to compel men to worſhip him contrary to the belief of their hearts and the full perſuaſions of their ſouls? Is it not written, that whatſoever is not of faith is ſin? And hath God given any men power and authority to compel others to ſin? Surely the end of magiſtracy is to reſtrain men from ſin, and not to compel men to ſin.

Query 5. Whether under the law of Moſes, the worſhip was not firſt made manifeſtly clear to mens hearts and conſciences, and they fully perſuaded thereof; before they ſuffered any penalties annexed for failing in it, or turning aſide from it?

Query 6. Whether under the goſpel, Chriſt or his apoſtles did ever compel any by outward force to their way of worſhip, or give any rule for compulſion after their days. Did not they ſay, they were not lords over mens faith, but that there was one Lord and Maſter, even Chriſt, to whom every man was to give an account? Now if men ſhould commend us for worſhiping as they teach us, and by laws require of us contrary to the belief and full perſuaſion of our own ſouls, and Chriſt condemn and puniſh us therefore, would it not go hard with us?

Query 7. Was it not the beaſt that compelled men to worſhip, and is he not branded therefore, *Rev.* xiii.? But could he by his laws and penalties compel any, whoſe names were written in the book of life, to his worſhip? others indeed he did compel, and cauſe to worſhip, as may be ſeen in that chapter.

Query 8. Is not Chriſt's kingdom ſpiritual? Are not the weapons of his warfare ſpiritual? Are they not mighty through God, to convince and eſtabliſh men in the truth, and in the way of the goſpel-worſhip? Would Chriſt have any people forced by outward compulſion, to ſerve or worſhip him? Whoſoever will, let him come, ſaith he; and his people are a willing people, and God loveth a chearful giver and a chearful worſhipper. Is not compulſion a great argument againſt that church and miniſtry that uſeth it, that they want the ſpiritual weapons? That they want the authority and power of the true church and miniſtry, and ſo are fain to ſeek to ſupply it by the authority and power of Man? For that which is of man, if it were not held up by man, would fall; but the truth will grow and increaſe, and that which is of God will ſtand and out-live all the violence and oppoſitions of men. And one thing is worthy of very ſerious conſideration concerning this worſhip, which there is ſuch ſtriving to compel men to, which is this; what kind of perſons they are that diſſent from it, and what they are, for the generality, that ſo cry it up. Are not many of them very looſe, prophane, ſwearers, curſers, exceſſive drinkers, yea ſome of them Atheiſts? Is there not a ground of jealouſy at leaſt, if not a ſtrong argument, againſt that worſhip and way of religon which pleaſeth theſe?

Can that which came from God, and is of God, pleaſe corrupt man? And who are they that diſſent from, and dare not practiſe it? Are they not men

men of tender conſciences, and that fear to offend the Lord, and who ſeek after that religion and worſhip, wherein there is truth, life, virtue, and power? Now which of theſe are likelieſt to know the truth, and to be taught of the Lord the true worſhip.

Oh! that theſe things were ſeriouſly conſidered of; for though men were wicked and prophane themſelves, yet if they did not oppoſe that which is good, but could ſuffer others quietly to ſerve and fear the Lord, neither their ſin nor danger would be ſo great.

Reading Goal, 19th of the 7th Month, 1670.

I. P.

He that ruleth over men muſt be juſt, ruling in the fear of God, now he that is juſt and ruleth in the fear of God, cannot afflict or puniſh any for fearing God, or for worſhip which they perform to him in his fear. Shall not he that made the world, be worſhipped by his children and ſervants, according as he requires of them? But ſhall the authorities of this world oppoſe him therein, and with all their might ſtop and hinder (as much as in them lies) his children and ſervants from obeying him? Now the Lord God of heaven and earth (who is above all, and hath power over all) knoweth, that not in oppoſition to authority, but in the fear of his name, do we (who are called QUAKERS) meet together to worſhip him as he hath required of us; and that if we ſhould not ſo do, we ſhould ſin againſt him, and be guilty of rebellion againſt the King of kings, who is able to ſave and deſtroy body and ſoul for ever. And in this caſe it is that Chriſt hath bid us not fear him that can kill the body, and can go no further, but rather to fear him who can kill both body and ſoul, and caſt them into hell.

Oh! that the magiſtrates of this nation were juſt, ruling in the fear of God! could they then afflict thoſe that fear him as they do, even ſuch as are taught by him to love and pray for their enemies? Is not there work enough for the magiſtrates ſword againſt manifeſt wicked men, but it muſt ſtill be turned againſt thoſe that fear the Lord? Will ye provoke the Lord to the utmoſt? Are ye ſtronger than he? Will ye put it to the proof, whether he be able to deliver his people or no? Remember, the nations are but as the drop of a bucket, and as the ſmall duſt of the balance before him? What then is the wiſdom and ſtrength of one, two, three, or four nations, to his wiſdom and ſtrength?

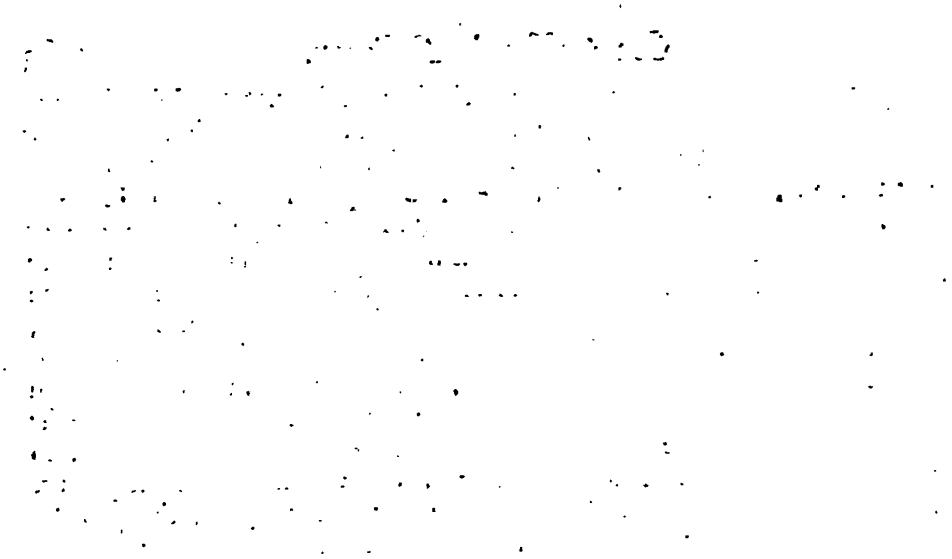
This is written in our hearts, that God is to have his due, as well as Cæſar his; and that God is to have his due in the firſt place, but Cæſar after God, and in ſubjection to God. But if there be an abſolute neceſſity

ceſſity put upon us by men (which they ought not to do), either of diſobeying God or Cæſar, we do really believe that queſtion of ſome of the apoſtles, in this caſe, to be very weighty, and worthy to be duly conſidered, *Acts* iv. 19. Whether it be right in the ſight of God, to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye (for we cannot but obey the Lord our God in what he hath required and doth require of us). And truly if we ſhould ſo do, great and dreadful woe would be upon our ſouls, and we ſhould loſe the enjoyment of God's preſence, and the peace which paſſeth all underſtanding; which we cannot but value above our eſtates, liberties, or whatever outward thing we can enjoy or poſſeſs in this world, even above our very lives; yea, it were far better for every one of us to loſe our lives in our faithful teſtimony to the true worſhip of God in Spirit and truth, which he hath taught us, and required us to practiſe and give our teſtimony to, than to be found unfaithful and diſobedient to him herein.

Reading Goal, the 12th of the 7th Month, 1670.

I. P.

CONCERNING



CONCERNING THE

Diſpenſation of the GOSPEL,

OR THE

Diſpenſation of the SON in SPIRIT,

WHICH IS THE

LAST DISPENSATION,

WHEREBY THE

MYSTERY of GOD, the MYSTERY of the Work of Redemption, is finiſhed in the Heart, all created anew inwardly, all ſubdued that is contrary to GOD, the Soul brought into, or tranſlated into, the Everlaſting Kingdom, and the Kingdom at length delivered up to the FATHER, and GOD becomes All in All; where all Names ceaſe, and the Pure Eternal Being is known, united to, and lived in, after an unutterable Manner.

CONCERNING THE

DISPENSATION of the GOSPEL, &c.

TO know the Father (even the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt) as the fountain or original ſpring of light, life, love, wiſdom, power, holineſs, righteouſneſs, and all ſpiritual and heavenly bleſſings:

To know the Son as the way to the Father, as the way to life, peace, and bleſſedneſs in the Father:

To know the Son's Spirit, and the Father's alſo, whereby the Father draws to the Son, and the Son brings to the Father; whereby the Son quickens, begets, renews, ſanctifies, deſtroys, cuts down, burns up that which is droſſy, corrupt, and chaffy; yea, not only the fruits of ſin, but the very root itſelf, yea the very earth in which the root grows, and the heavens that water the earth are conſumed and paſs away inwardly, and a new heaven and a new earth is inwardly planted and formed, wherein dwells righteouſneſs; ſo that the cage of unclean birds, the place where the dragons lay, is ſhaken and removed, and the place of the wicked inwardly known no more; but inſtead thereof there are new heavens and earth, even of the new creation of God; which earth brings forth the increaſe of life, the fruits of life, the ſeeds and trees of righteouſneſs, of God's ſowing, planting, grafting, pruning, and cauſing to grow, that he may be glorified: I ſay,

Thus to know the Father, thus to know the Son, thus to know the Holy Spirit of light, life, love, and righteouſneſs, &c. not notionally in the brain, or with a comprehenſive knowledge of the mind, but livingly in the heart, in the light that ſhines from the Father and Son, in the life that ſprings from them, in the love which is of them (for, indeed, it is love that gives the bright, purely ſenſible and uniting knowledge): this is precious knowledge; and all knowledge of the very ſame things, any otherwiſe than as coming from, and held in, this ſpringing life, is of no compariſon with the excellency (for nature and virtue) of this kind of knowledge.

Now there have been two great diſpenſations of the Father, Son, and Spirit. The one figurative, the other ſubſtantial. The one called the law, the

the other the goſpel. For under the law the Father was made known, the Son made known, the Spirit made known; but all in figures and outward ways of manifeſtation. God was to that people of the Jews a fountain of living waters; and when they forſook him, and truſted in lying vanities, they forſook the fountain of their own mercies. They then forſook the fountain of living waters, digging to themſelves broken ciſterns that could hold no water.

So the Son was made known under the types and figures of the law, as the King of righteouſneſs, as the high-prieſt of God, as the prophet that God would raiſe up, as the ſpiritual rock which yielded the ſpiritual waters, of which the ſoul was to drink. And they that were a-thirſt were to come to him and buy wine and milk of him, and incline their ear to him, that they might hear and live, and he would make an everlaſting covenant with them, even the ſure mercies of David.

So the Spirit of God, which was typified under a pillar of cloud and fire in the wilderneſs, did ſtrive with man before the law, and was given to the Jews to inſtruct them, and to plough up their fallow ground, and circumciſe them inwardly, and to waſh their hearts from wickedneſs and vain thoughts, that they might not lodge in them.

But all this was not properly (in the Spirit and power of it) the diſpenſation of the law; but hid in a myſtery, and running under-ground, as I may ſo ſay. This was from another covenant, and part of another covenant than the covenant of the law, though in the time of the law. For there was another covenant which Moſes declared of, beſides the covenant of the law made in Horeb, which was the word of life, or word of faith in the mouth and heart, which teacheth the ſubſtance of the law, and alſo gives power to fulfill the righteouſneſs of the law, to them that hear and receive its voice, in the faith which it gives or begets. And ſo the Father of ſpirits was known in the time of the law. Chriſt the redeemer was known to live, yea to live in the heart in the time of the law. The free Spirit, the Spirit of love was received, and the preſence of God felt and enjoyed by God's Calebs, Joſhuahs, and Davids (by men after God's own heart) in the time of the law. Moſes had his meekneſs and tenderneſs, and was made faithful in all God's houſe by the Spirit of Chriſt, this meek lamb-like Spirit.

Now when the ſhadows came to an end, Chriſt the ſubſtance was to come. The everlaſting King, the everlaſting high-prieſt, the everlaſting prophet was to appear. The everlaſting rock and holy builder was to appear, and raiſe up David's tabernacle in Spirit, and miniſter in the true ſanctuary, by his light, by his life, by his power, by his righteous Spirit. There is not another tabernacle to be built, not another temple, not another Jeruſalem than the heavenly Jeruſalem, not another Mount Sion to be known or come to, than the goſpel Mount Sion; not another God, than God the judge of all in the goſpel-ſtate; not another word or law of life,

than the law which goeth forth out of Sion, and the word that iſſueth out from this heavenly Jeruſalem; not another water to waſh the ſoul with, not another blood to ſprinkle the conſcience with, not another ſpirit to enlighten, quicken, keep alive, and comfort, than the Spirit of light, life, and love from God, which reconciles unto God, and brings into the goſpel-righteouſneſs, reſt, and peace, and eſtabliſheth the ſoul therein.

So now, feeling the Spirit of the Son, and being led by him to the Father, and the Father with the Son, by the Holy Spirit, creating me anew, enlightening me, quickening me, raiſing me in life, circumciſing my heart to love, I am come to life, and at reſt in him that lives in me, and works in me, and gives me to live, and work, and reſt in him. For there are the ſabbath-day's works, even works of love, works of life, works of righteouſneſs and holineſs, works that the Lord works in the ſouls in whom he dwells and reſts, and which they in the pure reſt, peace, and joy of life, work in the Lord their God, who works all their works in them and for them.

Now in this goſpel-diſpenſation, or in this diſpenſation of the Son in Spirit, all other diſpenſations are gathered and wrapped up, and thoroughly experienced by the ſoul that travels with and is led by Chriſt, in this his goſpel-diſpenſation.

As firſt, There is Moſes in Spirit known and travelled through. There is the miniſtration of the law in the Spirit inwardly commanding known, heard, felt, received, before the goſpel-power is given to perform. And here is hard travel and ſore exerciſes. Here the Father is known commanding, and the ſoul conſents and would fain obey, but finds the law in the members rebelling againſt the law which the mind hath a ſenſe of, and deſires after.

Then afterwards comes the diſpenſation of the prophets, wherein there are prophecies of a better ſtate to come, openings of the mercy and love which is to be manifeſted in the latter days, at the end of theſe trials and exerciſes, wherein the ſoul hath promiſes from God, that the righteouſneſs ſhall be revealed, that power to become a ſon ſhall be given, and the enemy's ſtrength broken, and the bowed down ſoul raiſed up from under his oppreſſion, and the Lord ſhall tread him under the feet of the poor and needy, and the hungry and thirſty ſhall be filled with righteouſneſs, and the meek come to inherit God's earth, and the beggar come from the dunghill, be raiſed up in the power of life, to ſit among princes, even the princes in the heavenly glory of God's everlaſting kingdom.

After this ſucceeds John's miniſtry in Spirit, even the levelling the mountains, the raiſing up the vallies, the preparing the way for the King of glory, that he may come in and reveal his glory inwardly. For not in the time of the law inwardly, nor in the time of the prophecies inwardly; but after the ſoul is exerciſed and prepared inwardly (that being waſted which hindered, that raiſed up which lay low, that made ſtraight which lay crooked, that

that made plain that was rough, and ſo the way is prepared and fitted for the great appearance of the great God and Saviour, in the pure, bright goſpel glory, Spirit, and power), doth the King come ſuddenly into his temple; not when the foundation is laid, but when Sion is built up, doth God appear in his glory therein. Read *Iſa.* xl. 3, 4, 5. and conſider. After John's coming in a body of fleſh, and preparing the way by his outward miniſtry, Chriſt came in a body of fleſh, and was revealed as the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, by the life, Spirit, and power that that body was filled with. And after John comes in Spirit, and prepares the way in any heart, by the mighty and effectual operation of his miniſtry there, then Chriſt comes after him in Spirit, in the great power and glory of the Father, and the Father is revealed, and the Son alſo in the Spirit of light, life, love, and righteouſneſs, and the glory of the Lord is beheld with open face, in the glaſs of life and righteouſneſs, and the ſoul is changed into the ſame image, and partakes of the heavenly glory, and is married or joined to the Lord, to become one ſpirit with him, and hath fellowſhip with the Father and the Son in the light of life; and this is the goſpel-ſtate and glory, and there is not another.

Now take one ſcripture more which ſums up all diſpenſations, and ſets up the diſpenſation of the Son in Spirit as the laſt, as the diſpenſation of the laſt days. It is *Heb.* i. 1. read but what things are ſpoken of to be brought to paſs in the laſt days of the great goſpel-glory, to be revealed then of the perfect redeeming to God, and centering in him, of being married to him, and becoming one with him, *&c.* and of the Son's being the miniſter in the goſpel-ſtate, by the Spirit and power of the endleſs life, to bring it all forth, and accompliſh it in the huſbandry and building of God. Conſider the place; at ſundry times, and in divers manners, God ſpake in times paſt by Moſes, by the prophets, by John; but now the laſt days are come, now the laſt diſpenſation is come, now the covenant wherein God himſelf is the teacher, is come, now the time of building the Sion, the Jeruſalem, wherein God himſelf will dwell for ever, is come; now the light of the city of God is come, which is an eternal light, an unchangeable light. Now the Spirit of love, which brings up the goſpel-life, is come, and edifies the holy goſpel-building, in the goſpel-love and life. Oh! the light, oh! the life, oh! the love, oh! the righteouſneſs, oh! the divine nature, which is now revealed and partook of in the Son! He is the brightneſs of the Father's glory; and thither he brings his. What would ye have more? He deſtroys antichriſt inwardly, by the brightneſs of his coming or appearing. Oh! the deſolations that he makes inwardly of ſin and iniquity in the hearts of his! He is the expreſs image (or engraving) of his Father's ſubſtance; and he makes thee, who art one with him in his Spirit of life and love, of the ſame image with him. He tranſlateth thee out of Satan's image, into his very image. His light, his life, his love, his righteouſneſs, his divine nature, doth not wax old as a garment, but

endure

endure and remain the ſame for ever. He is Alpha and Omega. There was nothing before him, nor ſhall be after him. There is no other thing appertaining to life and godlineſs, but what he now diſpenſeth in the gospel; no other kingdom but what ſtands in the power of the life and righteouſneſs, which is now revealed in the peace, love, and joy of the Spirit. The goſpel-building is his houſe; and he is faithful in all his houſe, as a Son, having received all power from his Father, to gather fully, to preſerve fully, to build up fully, to leaven fully with life and righteouſneſs, even in ſoul, body, and ſpirit, to lead into the Holy Land, and to enable to keep the holy ſabbath there, even to ceaſe from ſin, and every thing that burdens the life, and to reſt in God, and not work any thing of ourſelves any more, but to feel the Spirit of life, love, and power work in us. And his yoke of life, his yoke of love, his yoke of the power, is the pure goſpel-liberty comprehended in. The Lord Jeſus did appear in fleſh; but now he appears in Spirit, and is Spirit; giving himſelf to be life and Spirit in his. And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty; and every thing which is of a fleſhly nature, which deceiveth and imbondageth, wherein the pure liberty is not, he diſcovereth, and keepeth his out of, that ſo they may ſtand faſt in the pure liberty of the light, life, and love of his Holy Spirit, wherewith he maketh his free.

The Eighteenth of the
9th Month, 1678.

I. P.

SOME

EXPERIENCES,

Which it hath pleaſed the LORD to give me, concerning his Way, his Truth, his Church and People, againſt whom the Gates of Hell cannot prevail.

Firſt, IT hath pleaſed the Lord to manifeſt to me, that there is a light wherewith he (in his tender mercy, love, and good-will) enlighteneth mankind. This light I have found my own ſoul enlightened with, even from my very childhood, though I never took notice of it to be what it is, till the Lord manifeſted it to me. But ever ſince it pleaſed the Lord

to

to manifeſt it to me, and to turn my mind to it, I have found it to ſhine inwardly in my heart, even as the outward light of the ſun ſhineth outwardly to the outward eye.

Secondly, By this light it hath pleaſed the Lord to give me the diſtinction of things inwardly in my own heart. The Lord hath ſhewn me by it evil and good in my own heart, and taught me to chuſe the good, and refuſe the evil. So that as my eye hath been turned to this light, and kept to this light, I have known and walked in the way of life; for the power which hath appeared in this light, hath created me anew, made me a child of light, and taught and cauſed me to walk in this light, as God is in the light. And in this light I have experienced fellowſhip with the Father who is light, and with his Son who is light alſo, and with all the children of light.

Thirdly, In this light (being gathered out of darkneſs into it, and abideing in it) I have had remiſſion of ſins. For no ſin is laid to the charge of any ſoul that abides in this light, but only to ſuch as continue in darkneſs, or go out from it into darkneſs. This I have had the conſtant experience of from my firſt diſtinct knowledge of God's truth; for I never found, at any time, any condemnation, while I abode in the pure light of God's Holy Spirit, and bleſſed witneſs; but if at any time I hearkened to the enemy, the prince of darkneſs, and went by his allurements into darkneſs, I ſtill met with condemnation there.

Fourthly, In this light I have received power to become a Son to God. Oh! it is unutterable to relate what power is here received againſt the ſoul's enemies, and to do the will of God! Indeed, in the light there is power; yea, full power, ſuitable to every ſoul's condition. There needs no more power (no not to the higheſt condition) than what is laid up, and to be received in this light. All the power of darkneſs is communicated in the darkneſs, to the children of darkneſs; and all the power of light is communicated in the light, to the children of light. In the light there is an holy will and ability given daily more and more, and the unholy will and ability (which troubleth the holy ſeed) removed out of the way.

Fifthly, In this light I know the true church, the holy gathering by the goſpel-ſpirit and power; for none are the true church in the goſpel-days but ſuch. The law-church was a company of Jews after the fleſh, circumciſed in fleſh, to keep the outward law of commandments; but the goſpel-church is a company of believers after the Spirit, circumciſed in Spirit, to keep the inward law, even the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus, which makes free from the law of ſin and death. So that all the goſpel-church are children of the true woman, growing up in the holy liberty from the bondage of ſin and corruption, unto the royal law of holineſs and righteouſneſs. So that being in the light, I ſee the children of light, and know that the holy gathering, even the goſpel-church, are ſuch, and that none elſe can be of the goſpel-church, having (out of the light) nothing

of

of the nature of the goſpel-church or Spirit in them. Ye may as well make a man without the nature of a man, as a Chriſtian without the nature of a Chriſtian. He was not a Jew outward under the law, without the nature of a Jew outward; nor is he a Jew inward under the goſpel, without the nature of a Jew inward. And as the law-church conſiſted of Jews outward, ſo the goſpel-church conſiſts of Jews inward; which are children of light, and not of darkneſs, and can be known only by them who are in the true light. So that the Lord having mercifully gathered me into his goſpel-light, theſe things (in his goſpel-light) have been clearly ſeen by me.

Sixthly, In this light I know the goſpel-worſhip, the worſhip which lies not in the darkneſs of man's apprehenſions, but in the light which ſhines from God in the heart. For the children of God are taught in the light, know God their Father in his own pure light, and worſhip in the light, wherein they are taught by him to know him. They worſhip in the truth. They are led by the Spirit of light and truth, out of darkneſs, out of deceit, out of all kind of error and unrighteouſneſs; and they worſhip in truth, and in the Spirit, into which they are led, and in which there is no deceit nor error. They gather together in the Son's name (in his living name, oh! wait to underſtand that!). And there the Son is in the midſt of them, and his life and Spirit intercedes in them; and in his name they offer up the righteous ſacrifices, the holy ſacrifices of life, and the pure incenſe, in which the Father is greatly delighted, and ſmells a ſweet ſmell and ſavour of reſt.

Seventhly, In this light I have experienced the good conſcience, even the conſcience which anſwers to truth, and will not anſwer to unrighteouſneſs. Indeed in this light I have felt my heart ſprinkled from an evil conſcience (I teſtify it in deep humility of ſpirit, and in great thankfulneſs towards the Lord). The darkneſs defiles and ſtains; but in the pure light the heart is waſhed, cleanſed, and ſanctified, from whence ariſeth the anſwer of a good conſcience towards God. And in this light the conſcience is ſtill kept good; but though it hath its habitation in the light, if it keep not its habitation, but go out from thence into the darkneſs, it is ſoon defiled and corrupted again.

Eighthly, I have (and bleſs the Lord I daily do ſtill) experienced faith, the heavenly faith of the new birth, the precious gift of God to his own children, in this pure bleſſed light of the Son of God, which ſhines from the heavenly glory into the hearts of his redeemed ones. Unbelief came at firſt from the darkneſs, and lodgeth in the darkneſs, iſſuing thence into thoſe that give ear to the dark ſpirit; but faith ſprings from the holy root of life in the heart. Here I cannot but believe, and alſo know him in whom I do believe, who is the holy power of life and light, who oppoſeth and overcometh the prince of darkneſs, who hath the power of death. And in the light God carries on the work of faith with power; and unbelief, which ſtops it, is not able to enter the minds of thoſe, who are ſtayed upon the Lord in his pure light.

Ninthly,

Ninthly, In the light I taſte and enjoy the pure peace, which paſſeth man's underſtanding. In the darkneſs is condemnation and trouble, as man's mind comes to be awakened; but in the light is righteouſneſs, juſtification, and peace, to all that dwell and abide there. Perfect peace the mind here grows up into, which the enemy cannot break or interrupt. Indeed, in the darkneſs, out of the light, the peace that is there is eaſily broken; but never in the light is the true peace broken.

Tenthly, In the light I have experience of the killing or mortifying of that which is contrary to the light. *I kill, I make alive, ſaith the Lord.* Indeed he doth ſo in and by his light. Doth not light expel darkneſs in the figure? Much more doth it ſo in the ſubſtance. Light drives away darkneſs, baniſheth darkneſs, deſtroyeth darkneſs, in the mind that is truly enlightened by the Lord, and ſingly gives up to his light. Oh! the deſolations of darkneſs (the works of darkneſs, the power of darkneſs) that God makes in the hearts of ſuch as are ſenſible of, and ſubject to, the light of his Son ſhining there. The Lord there cuts his work ſhort in righteouſneſs, making an end of the kingdom of darkneſs, revealing his own kingdom inſtead thereof, and gathering and tranſlating the mind thereinto.

Eleventhly, In the light I have experience of the new creation in Chriſt Jeſus, even the paſſing away of the old things, and the new things coming inſtead thereof. The old heart gone, the hard heart gone, and a new and tender one inſtead thereof. The old law of ſin and death taken out of the way, and the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus received in the place thereof. And the fear of the new covenant put into the new heart (in which is the beginning and perfection of the heavenly wiſdom), and the Spirit of God put within, to enlighten, enliven, and fill the mind with life and righteouſneſs, and cauſe it to walk with God in the new and living way, and to know his ſtatutes and judgments, and do them.

Twelfthly, In the light the goſpel-love is known and ſprings. In the darkneſs is enmity; but in the light is love. It is true indeed, that here the whole law is fulfilled, even of loving the Lord God with all the heart, ſoul, mind, and ſtrength, and one's neighbour as one's ſelf. Yea, here one is not only commanded to love enemies, but taught and enabled ſo to do. Yea, keep but here in the light, no enmity can ſpring up, but only love to the greateſt enemies, whom we have no coals of wrath, but only of love to heap upon.

Thirteenthly, Here I meet with, and partake of, a cool, meek, patient, tender, gentle, quiet, lowly ſpirit, which is of the Lord, and of much eſteem with him. This is the Lamb's nature, who is light; and this alſo is their nature who are of the Lamb, and walk in the light of the Lamb. All Eſau's roughneſs, all Iſhmael's diſdain and ſcoffing, all Cain's envy and cruelty towards his brother, is of the darkneſs, whereof Cain, Iſhmael, and Eſau are, and wherein they walk, and their offspring; but this is not found in them who are light in the Lord, and who walk in the light, as he

is in the light. And in patience to poſſeſs the ſoul, and to be tender towards ſinners, meek, quiet, and humble before the Lord, and of a gentle ſpirit towards all. Oh! who, beſides the children of light, know the preciouſneſs of being thus created by the Lord, and of thus walking before him, in the light of the Lord Jeſus, in the renewings of the mind by him, in the life and power, wherein he anew createth and changeth, theſe things become natural. For in the light, whatever is of the darkneſs, whatever is corrupt, whatever is of the devil's kingdom, is diſcovered and removed from them that take up the light's yoke; and a contrary nature planted in the mind inſtead thereof, which brings forth quite other fruits, even of a contrary kind to what the darkneſs brought forth before. So that as it was ſaid of Chriſt, Behold the Lamb of God; ſo it may be ſaid of them, behold the lambs of God, who are ſweet, meek, gentle, lowly in heart like him, bringing forth fruits like him, and walking like ſheep among wolves, as he alſo walked.

Laſtly, (To mention no more) Here, in the light, I meet with certainty, aſſurance, ſatisfaction; yea, infallibility. I meet with the evidence and demonſtration of God's Spirit, which is infallible. I meet with God's witneſs, which is an infallible witneſs. I meet with God's Spirit, which is an infallible Spirit, who infallibly leads into all truth, and infallibly guides in the truth. I meet with an infallible ſhepherd, who hath an infallible voice, and gives to his ſheep an infallible ear, wherewith they infallibly hear. He opens an infallible eye, and gives to it an infallible ſight of God, and the heavenly myſteries of his kingdom. The Spirit breathes infallibly, begets infallibly, leads infallibly, creates a new heart, a right ſpirit; which heart, which ſpirit, is of God's infallible nature, like him; for that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit. That which is born of man's fallible ſpirit and wiſdom is fallible; but that which is born of God's Spirit and heavenly wiſdom, is of the nature of his Spirit and wiſdom; and hence it is that wiſdom is juſtified of her children. The apoſtle ſpeaks to the Galatians of having begun in the Spirit, *Ch.* iii. 3. and did they not begin in that which is infallible? And if they went on in the Spirit, did they not go on in that which is infallible? I never found the light deceive me, nor did I ever find the birth of God's Spirit, the holy elect ſeed, deceived in me. And the new and living way, wherein this birth walks, is infallible, in which there is no erring by thoſe who eye the Lord, and follow his Spirit therein. This is the way caſt up (the way of holineſs, life, and peace, for the ranſomed and redeemed of the Lord to walk in in the goſpel-days, in which the wayfaring men, though fools, ſhall not err, *Iſa.* xxxv. 8. The Lord, who hath promiſed, is able to make it good. The Lord make it more and more manifeſt, and bring more and more people into it, and keep them in the guidance of his bleſſed Spirit of truth, that they may ſee his light, and walk therein, and not let in any temptations from the ſpirit of darkneſs, and ſo follow him, and miſs of the guide unto, and the preſerver in, the new and living way.

POST-

POSTSCRIPT.

I DO not ſay that I, as a man, am infallible, or that any of us as men are infallible; but God's light, God's grace, God's truth, God's Spirit, God's wiſdom and power, is infallible; and ſo far as we partake of that, are gathered into, and abide in that, we partake of that which is infallible, and are gathering into, and abide in that, which is infallible. And oh! let not men reſt in, or be contented with, that knowledge which is fallible, but preſs after unity and fellowſhip with the Lord in his infallible Spirit; there being no true union nor fellowſhip with him in any thing that is fallible.

Oh! that Proteſtants, Papiſts, Jews, Turks, Indians, did all know and own this light, that there might be an end of the darkneſs and miſery, wherewith mankind hath been ſo long overwhelmed; and happineſs both in particular nations, and in the whole world, might be experienced in the ſtead thereof. For mens erring from the light and Spirit of God, hath been the cauſe of all their miſery; and their returning to the light and Spirit of God (from which all have erred) will take away the cauſe of their miſery, and in it (as they faithfully ſubject to the Lord and travel therein) they ſhall find his power, love, and mercy revealed, towards their reſtoring unto happineſs.

Thirty-firſt of the 5th Month, 1679.

I. P.

CONCERNING THE

TIMES and SEASONS,

Both which have Been, and which are yet to Be.

WHEN God made man in his own image, placing him in Paradiſe, and giving him dominion over the works of his hands; then was a time of great joy to Adam and Eve, and ſhould have ſtill been ſo to them, and all mankind, had they continued in the ſtate wherein they were created.

When Eve, and by her means Adam, hearkened to the voice of the Serpent, diſobeyed the Lord their Creator, aſpiring after wiſdom, and the knowledge of good and evil, out of God's way; then was a ſeaſon of miſery

Adam and all his poſterity; the holy and heavenly image being loſt, and a curſed image gained in the ſtead thereof, and ſo man thruſt out of Paradiſe, and the bleſſedneſs thereof, into the earth, which was curſed for man's ſake. So in this ſtate, ſin and the curſe is man's portion, inſtead of the holineſs and bleſſedneſs, which his Creator had allotted him.

When God promiſed the bleſſed ſeed, and revealed himſelf to the fathers in the faith, begetting ſons to himſelf, who heard his voice, obeyed and walked with him; then was a bleſſed time and ſeaſon to them, though ſin and death reigned in the world. But when the ſons of God alſo forgat him, and mingled their ſeed with the corrupted world, then the deluge came, ſweeping away all but Noah with his family, and the creatures ſaved in the ark.

When the Lord choſe the Jews to be a people to himſelf, from amidſt all nations, delivering them by his outſtretched arm out of Egypt, deſtroying Pharaoh and his hoſt, and led them through the wilderneſs, fitting the ſucceeding generation for the good land, bringing them into it, bleſſing and eſtabliſhing them in it, while they feared him and walked in covenant with him, then was a bleſſed time and ſeaſon with that people. But when they provoked God, brought his judgments often, and at laſt utter ruin and deſolation upon themſelves, then were ſeaſons of great miſery and diſtreſs, and at laſt of utter deſtruction to them.

While the Gentiles were caſt off, and were no people, being of the corrupt ſeed which God hath not choſen, nor had any delight in, and while they knew not the living God, but worſhiped ſtocks and ſtones, and ſo were liable to the pouring down of his wrath and indignation upon all occaſions, and to utter ruin and deſtruction, when their iniquities were full, it was a ſad time and ſeaſon with them, wherein they were eſtranged from the life of God, and his holy covenant of promiſe, and were without God in the world.

When the Lord preached the goſpel to the Gentiles, by his holy apoſtles and miniſters, manifeſting Chriſt to them, the hope of glory, the myſtery hid from ages and generations, engrafting them into the holy vine and olive-tree, giving them to partake of the ſweetneſs and fatneſs thereof, even of the riches of his grace and goodneſs in his Son, who is eternal life, and gives eternal life to all his; then was ſuch a time and ſeaſon of love, grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jeſus Chriſt (both towards Jews and Gentiles) as had not been known in the world before.

When the Chriſtian church apoſtatiſed, the love in many waxing cold, men minding the name of Chriſtianity, and form of Godlineſs, but not the life and power, and ſo the Lord was provoked againſt them, to remove their candleſtick out of its place, and give up the outward court to the Gentiles, and ſo the Spirit was loſt or departed from, the life loſt, the power loſt, the everlaſting goſpel hid from mens eyes, and darkneſs and mens inventions ſet up inſtead thereof, in nations, tongues, and people, and the witneſſes

witneſſes to any appearances of God's living truth and holy power perſecuted; then was a ſad time, then was a ſeaſon of death and darkneſs reigning over all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, and the cup of fornication drunk by them all, and all generally bewitched by it, except thoſe whoſe names were written in the Lamb's book of life. This was the greateſt time of darkneſs (wherein the myſtery of iniquity moſt deeply wrought in the deepeſt ways of deceit) that ever was in the world.

When the church comes again out of the wilderneſs, when the Spirit and power of God builds up again the goſpel-church in its primitive glory, when the everlaſting goſpel is preached again to all nations, kindreds, tongues, and languages, in the authority and power of God, when the Spirit of the Lord is poured out plentifully on his ſons and daughters, and they propheſy, walk, and live in it, when God dwells and walks in his people, and his true light ſhines in them, diſpelling the darkneſs thoroughly, and filling them with the glory and majeſty of the Lord, and they aſcend up, out of the world's ſpirit and nature, into his ſpirit and nature, even in the ſight of their enemies, and the full wrath of the Lamb be poured out on Babylon, and the full glory revealed in Sion; then ſhall there be ſuch a day of brightneſs and pure heavenly glory, as ſhall dazzle the eyes of all beholders.

But the paſſing away of this night, and the bringing forth of this day, will be very terrible and dreadful, both in particulars and in nations. The kingdoms of this world muſt indeed become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Chriſt; but it will require great power to bring it about. The wrath and ſtrength of the ſpirit of darkneſs will be working againſt the Lord and his power to the utmoſt; and the more it works againſt the Lord and his power, the more will the Lord's power, and the wrath of the Lamb, be revealed againſt that ſpirit, and againſt all its devices and undertakings againſt the counſel and power of the Lord. Oh! bleſſed are they that are of the Lamb's nature and Spirit, of his righteouſneſs and meekneſs; for the wrath of the Lamb will not be kindled againſt them, but he will be a munition of rocks unto them, and their inward life ſhall be preſerved, and they ſhall enjoy peace with the Lord in the midſt of all that ſhall outwardly befall them.

Meſborow in Kent, Twenty-Second of the 6th Month, 1679.

The everlaſting goſpel hath been preached in this nation (and alſo other nations), juſt after that very manner as it was foretold it ſhould, *Rev.* xiv. 16. *Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come; and worſhip him that made heaven, and earth, and the ſea, and fountains of waters.*

Now they that have heard this bleſſed ſound of the everlaſting goſpel, and have learned to fear God with this fear which the goſpel calls for

(which

(which is the fear of the new covenant, which is not taught by the precepts of men, but which God puts into the heart in the new covenant), and to give glory to him, bowing to him, and learning righteouſneſs of him, in the hour of his judgment upon their ſouls, and have worſhiped him, and him only, in his Spirit and truth, which is the goſpel-worſhip, or the worſhip of God according to the everlaſting goſpel; theſe are accounted with God knowers and obeyers of the goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Theſe are a peculiar people to God, whom he hath taken an eſpecial care of, and whom he will hide under the ſhadow of his wings, and in the ſecret of his pavilion, while his wrath is poured out upon peoples and nations.

But others that have not been gathered under the ſhadow of God's wings, by the preaching of the everlaſting goſpel, who have not known or obeyed the ſound thereof; when the ſtorm comes, when the wrath of God is revealed againſt all ungodlineſs and unrighteouſneſs of men (whereof this nation is full, and hath had ſeveral tokens of God's great diſpleaſure for a long time), they will not find a ſhelter, though they flie to the rocks and mountains to hide and cover them from the wrath of the Lamb, but will lie open to the ſtroke of the overflowing ſcourge, which uſeth to overflow nations, after ſuch a deluge of ſin as hath long overflowed this nation. Oh! that men could hear the voice of the rod, and him who hath appointed it, and ſeek an hiding place, and enter into the chamber of reſt and quietneſs with the Lord, until the indignation be overpaſt.

Now unto any whoſe hearts are touched with the fear of the Lord, and the ſenſe of his righteous judgments and wrath due to this nation (which doubtleſs have come in part already, and are coming faſter and faſter, and entering into the very heart and bowels of it), and who would eſcape the ſtroke of God's dreadful hand, and find inward reſt and peace with him in the day of outward trouble and ſore diſtreſs;

To ſuch, a few words of advice, very early this morning, lay upon my heart.

Firſt, Seek the Lord (Oh! do not ſeek the world, but ſeek the Lord, who redeems out of the ſpirit of the world, where the wrath comes, and upon which it is to ſeize)! And *ſeek righteouſneſs, ſeek meekneſs; it may be, ye ſhall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger*, Zeph. ii. 3.

Secondly, Wait upon God, that ye may learn of him to *keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it are the iſſues of life.* If ever ye know the iſſues of life, ye muſt know them there; and if ye know the iſſues of life there, and they ſweetly iſſue up, and flow into your ſouls, they will refreſh and delight you in the midſt of all the ſore afflictions, troubles, and diſtreſſes, which can befall you outwardly. Read *Pſa.* xlvi. and conſider:

Thirdly, Mind who knocks at the door of your hearts, whether it be the deſtroyer or Saviour of the ſoul; for both theſe knock often at the door, but men are not aware thereof. And wait to receive power from God to be faithful door-keepers, that ye may keep the door of your hearts ſhut againſt the

the enemy, when he knocks with any temptation, and may open them to the Lord, when he knocks with any motion or pure ſtirring of life.

Fourthly, Wait to know, and experience truly, and alſo more and more, the Chriſtian Spirit and ſtate, the ſtate of a ſervant to the Father, and his Son Chriſt, the ſtate of a ſoldier, the ſtate of a pilgrim and holy traveller, to be doing the Lord's work (the Lord's will, and not your own), to be fighting the Lord's battles, againſt his and the ſoul's enemies, and to be travelling farther and farther out of the ſpirit, mind, and nature of this world (wherein the kingdom of darkneſs ſtands) into God's Spirit, where the kingdom of the dear Son is known and entered into, by thoſe that deny their own wiſdom, and become as little children.

Many have the form of godlineſs, who are not accepted of the Lord; but ſuch only as know God's power, and are led by his Spirit, ſuch are indeed in Chriſt Jeſus; for the holy power grafts the ſoul, mind, and ſpirit of a man, into the holy ſtock and root of life. And ſuch know the new creation in Chriſt, and the works of the new creation, which they perform and walk in (being God's *workmanſhip, created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works).* And here the *old things paſs away* (which can paſs away by no other means, but by the revealing of the arm and power of God inwardly in the heart, and by its effectual operation there), *and ſo all things become new.* Now, where all things become new, where the heart is new, the mind and ſpirit new, the deſires new, the joys and delights new, the life and converſation new, and the ſoul walks before the Lord, not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit, even in the newneſs thereof; what is there for the wrath of God to ſeize upon?

Though the Lord be a conſuming fire, yet it is to his enemies, to ſin, to unrighteouſneſs, to the chaffy, earthly mind and nature; he is not ſo to his children, to the wheat, to the holy ſeed, to them that are new created and cleanſed by him, to them that fear him, love him, walk with him, keep his commandments, obey the goſpel of his Son, denying all for him, and following the Shepherd and leader of their ſouls, out of all untruth and unrighteouſneſs, into all truth and righteouſneſs, Surely, theſe ſhall not only be able to abide, but dwell with the devouring fire, and everlaſting burnings; and that ſhall be their ſafety and ſhelter, when the flames thereof break forth to conſume and burn up the chaff every-where.

Twenty-fifth of the 6th Month, 1679.

POST-

POSTSCRIPT.

THE goſpel religion is very precious, being inwardly felt and experienced in the life and power of it; but a bare profeſſion of it, out of the life and power of godlineſs, is of no value in the ſight of God, nor is it of any profit or advantage to the ſoul.

ISAAC PENINGTON.

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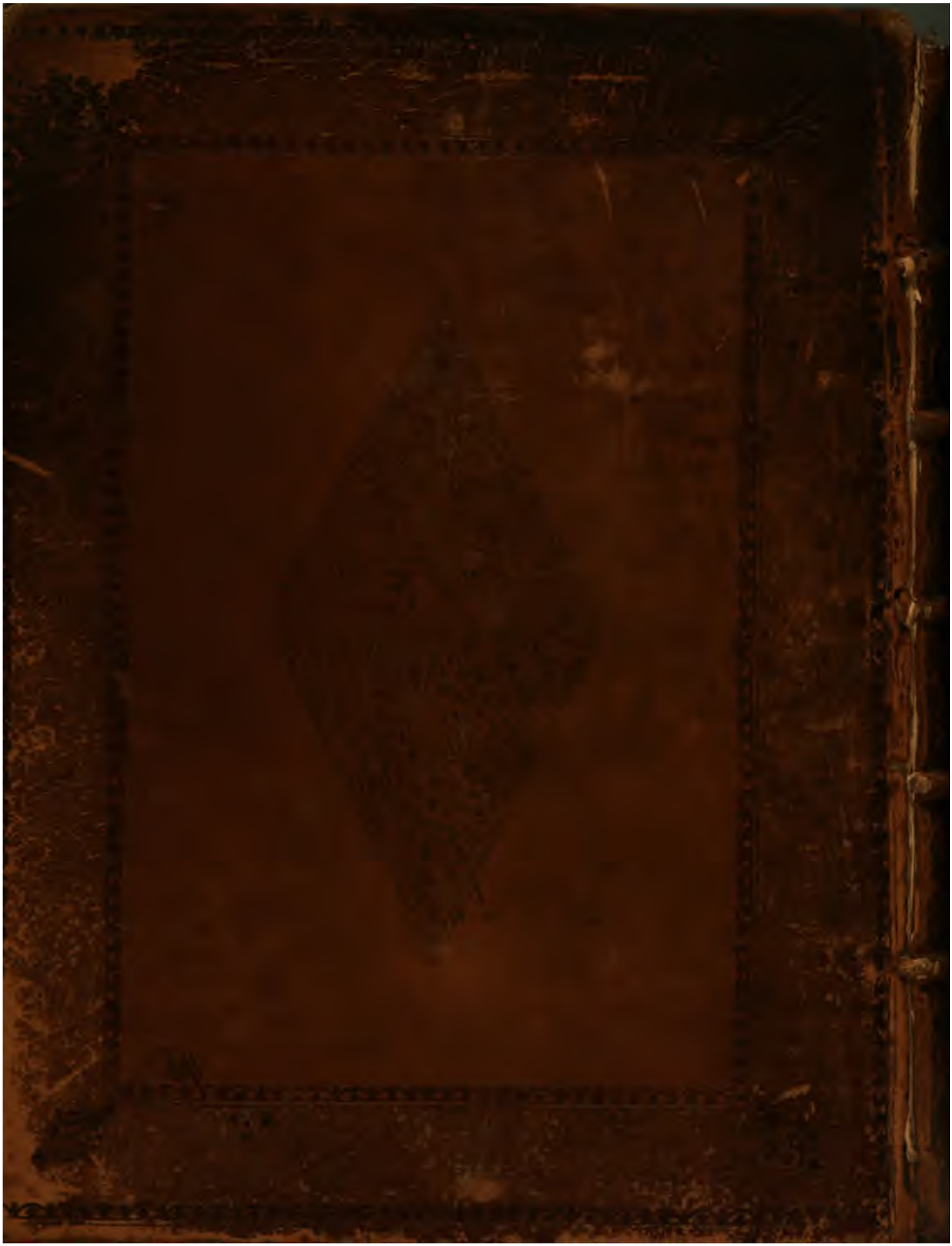
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